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## SOME REFLECTIONS ON "SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE".

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ONE of the latest additions to the already long list of intellectual enterprises is the Sociology of Knowledge, known in German as *Wissenssoziologie*. It is an attempt to consider knowledge as a social product, in so far as thinking is affected—even distorted—by the mental outlook of the group of which the individual thinker is inevitably a member. It would be very natural to object that the world has not had to wait until now to know that thinking can be biassed. The recognition of this is at least as old as Socrates. Much later, but still some centuries from our day, Bacon described the various kinds of 'idols'. Just before that, Machiavelli, with typical realism, had connected the opinions of men with their interests. More recently, Marx and Freud in their several ways have emphasised the same point, until at present it has become almost a commonplace to discount views as defence mechanisms or ideologies. The new sociology of knowledge is moving in this general current of thought, but its particular direction is towards showing, by a detailed analysis, how the social conditioning of thinking takes place.

All this is reflected in a book whose English version was published two years ago—Karl Mannheim's "Ideology and Utopia". Mannheim wrote the book (*i.e.*, the separate essays which have been collected into the volume) partly because he has been disturbed by the chaos into which knowledge has been thrown. When accusations of ideological thinking fall thick and fast, they will attach themselves to *all* thinking of all parties, with a collapse of confidence in thought in general.

This, Mannheim believes, is the desperate situation in which we are now found, and to which is traceable much of the world's disquiet. But on the other side, man's extremity is Mannheim's opportunity, or more precisely the opportunity of a sociology of knowledge. What we are now realising about social and political thinking has, indeed, always been true of it, but our realisation of the truth, and our working out of it systematically, may be the way of deliverance from this ancient ideological bondage. "Only when we are thoroughly aware of the limited scope of every point of view are we on the road to the sought-for comprehension of the whole. . . . The most promising aspect of the present situation is that we can never be satisfied with narrow perspectives, but will constantly seek to understand and interpret particular insights from an even more inclusive context."<sup>1</sup> In prosecuting the sociology of knowledge, the aim is to overcome subjectivism as far as may be; so "an effort must be made to find a formula for translating the results of one (insight) into those of the other, and to discover a common denominator for these varying perspectivistic insights".<sup>2</sup>

That an individual's thinking should be conditioned by his social grouping has been acknowledged for some time by sociologists, and Mannheim is quick to admit that he is by no means a pioneer. But he finds that sociologists treat of the source of knowledge, either as an aside, or with hesitancy to break with the old tradition of eternal and absolute truth. More specifically, a sociological treatment of knowledge is necessary for two reasons. For one thing, a great deal of human thinking, and that which has intensely practical consequences, is *about* social living and action, especially in its political features and in its movement through history. For another thing, this thinking itself is socially conditioned, and an analysis of the details of this conditioning is clearly desirable; hitherto it has not been attempted. What Mannheim hopes to gain from this has already been mentioned

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 270.



in part: to overcome the prevalent scepticism about thought, by establishing the basis of its objectivity, or as much objectivity as is possible; but the other and more direct hope is to create a veritable science of politics, for which at present we look in vain. The question, how is a science of politics possible, is of like spirit and should have similarly momentous results as the query of Kant as to how science in general or metaphysics is possible.

It is not to be wondered at that we have no science of politics, since we have not properly examined the causes of political parties and activities. These are without exception ideological in the most thorough going, *i.e.*, 'total', sense. They are different perspectives from points of view of social groups and their interests. These interests in their self-regarding influence may not be fully realised by the group, but all the same they are so powerful that they produce differences in the very structures of the minds of the group members, in the fundamental modes in which their thinking is carried out. The reason for the title of Mannheim's book is, that there may be a dominant group whose interested thinking falsifies the actual condition of society by blinding it to some important aspects, aspects whose due recognition would affect its own domination. This is the thinking which is *ideological*. It can be correct in its reading of actual conditions, but only up to a point. But there will be oppressed groups whose perspective is quite different. Because actual conditions grind them down, they have no concern with these conditions except to denounce them, in the interests of radical change towards a more acceptable order. Here also there is some true insight, in the *utopian* direction; but because of concentration upon it, there is consequent blindness to the realities of the actual. But in both cases there is the same fundamental cause in the partiality of thinking. It operates in the one case to preserve the *status quo* and in the other to disrupt it, but with an equal inability to be fully objective.

If there is any substance in this analysis, it is clearly important that it should become a programme of study and be

carried as far as scientific method will take it. This all the more, if Mannheim's twofold hope about its consequences can be realised. The first part of this hope is that scepticism (in the particular form of relativism) may be upset and the objectivity of thinking be reestablished. It is therefore of interest to notice the proposed method of attaining this aim. The basic assumption is that we have but to understand how our thinking is bound in order to be free from the shackles. Knowledge about knowledge, as about anything else, is power: it is the power to know the truth free from distortion. This underlying assumption develops into three principal theses of a sociology of knowledge. First, that the nature of thought is revealed through its social origination; secondly, that the modes of thinking are determined by action, collective action; and thirdly, that the springs of this action are in the 'collective unconscious' and are irrational.

# I.

In the commonly accepted notion of thinking, it is definitely an individual possession. Nay more: it is not simply that which a thinker *has*, but that in and through which he is himself. My thoughts are my own, not just because they have come *into* my head, since they may have come *from* anywhere, but because I have put the impress of myself and of my assent upon them. External compulsion may prevent me from expressing my thoughts in words, but it cannot prevent me from thinking those thoughts. Thinking at all events is free even if speech is not. Indeed, the processes of thought within me are as much a sign that I am free as is the so-called freedom of the will. If course, the thoughts that flow through my head will not be freakish, but will have a good deal in common with those of other persons, especially of those with whom I usually associate. And naturally I will associate closely with those with whom I have much 'in common', including a community of ideas. I may even be a person of little intellectual initiative, so that my ideas are mainly a reflection of the opinions of my social sets. But if these



opinions don't arise in me, they have to arise somewhere, and always in some *individual* mind that is blest with individual independence of judgment. In some such way would run the general account of this matter.

But the sociologist of knowledge knows better. To him, this self-centred independence and initiative of thinking is a delusion, and he protests that far too much importance has been given to the influence of individual thinkers upon the history of ideas. If we look closer, we find that even these minds are not as independent as they appeared. They, too, as well as their weaker brethren, reflect the outlook of some group of which they are inescapably members. Every human being must be a grouper, and so also with his thinking. Mannheim takes this group membership of individuals for granted, perhaps because he thinks it to be a firmly won result of sociological research; and this may be why he has little to say as to how group membership is established. But he does say something. We are informed that groups are not merely classes in the Marxian sense, but also generations, status groups, sects, occupational groups, schools, etc. We must acknowledge these because of the wealth of types of knowledge and perspectives which have appeared in the course of history. Even more definite is the statement that "we belong to a group not only because we are born into it, not merely because we profess to belong to it, nor finally because we give it our loyalty and allegiance, but primarily because we see the world and certain things in the world the way it does".<sup>1</sup> Does this mean that birds of a feather flock together, as though from positions widely separated? Hardly that, since we are usually born into our groups, and even more because "of all the social groupings and units, class stratification is the most significant, since in the final analysis all the other social groups arise from and are transformed as parts of the more basic conditions of production and domination".<sup>2</sup> Mannheim, though he sits loose to Marxism, admits its determinative influence upon the creation of the sociology of knowledge, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

here is a concrete instance of it. He also admits Freudian influence, which comes out in the claim that the causes of group thinking lie deeper than the level of consciousness. There are "irrational depths which have not as yet been comprehended and which are incomprehensible by ordinary historical methods . . . We are given a glimpse of a realm which up to the present appears to have remained unchanging. It includes the blind biological instincts which in their eternal sameness underlie every historical event. These forces can be mastered externally by a technique [as when a dictator plays upon mass psychology], but can never reach the level of meaning and can never be internally understood".<sup>1</sup>

The situation for the sociologist of knowledge is now becoming clearer, but is it becoming more satisfactory as an explanation? The thinking of the individual (let us say it again), in its details and also its main lines—its categories—is determined by the thought of his group. As this group is only one among many and has its distinctive interest, its thought is but one perspective on the real world, and so is distorted: it is ideological or utopian as the case may be. Remember that this distortion is not at all in the nature of deliberate lying, but is unconscious; the group really believes that its thinking is correct, and that it is the only thinking which is correct. It may be ready to accuse other groups of ideologies, but fondly assumes that it itself is free from this taint. Well then: a group is defined as a number of persons who see the world and certain things in the world in the same ways. Lest we should imagine that this means the formation of groups by the deliberate coming together of persons with the same views, so as to find congenial company, we must remember that they are formed in the penultimate resort by economic determination, and ultimately by blind biological instincts which are irrational and are ever the same. We are to understand, no doubt, that the economic urge is the first concrete expression of the general biological urgency, the one which is closest to the ground, so to say. No doubt also

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 128.



that these instincts are those usually recognised which satisfy the needs for nourishment, for shelter, for defence, for sex, and possibly also for company.

There is no difficulty in admitting that human conduct is biologically founded, and that it is considerably affected by the fundamental instincts. But it is not so easy to see how these instincts should favour *group* phenomena and consciousness. A leading feature of group life is the feeling of solidarity, the loyalty of each to the views and objectives of all. But these views and aims are rationalisations of urges which (especially as for Mannheim there is no group-mind) are distinctly individual and self-regarding in their native character. When I feel impelled to find food, clothing, and defence, and to relieve my sexual itch, there is nothing so far in these feelings to impel me to give equal consideration to the similar feelings of others, still less to give them preference to my own. Hobbes is right in reading such a situation as a war of all against all. There is no glimmer within it of the solidarity and loyalty which groups undoubtedly can show. To be sure, there is the gregarious instinct, and this may be expected to do the trick. But can it? For one thing, it is alternatively named the herd instinct, and it need produce no more than the kind of group unity to be found among animals; and this is not the kind which the sociologist of knowledge has in view, for all his emphasis on blind biological impulses. (And why, for the matter of that, should any of the other impulses bring us beyond the animal level?) For another thing, the herd instinct of itself is neutral and unenlightening in respect to the biological preservation of its members; it can be perfectly expressed in the Gadarene swine's mob-rush headlong into the sea. If the gregarious instinct is to be a factor in group activity which is at least sufficiently intellectualised as to rationalise itself, it must be helped out by something more than blind biological impulse.

But suppose that we waive this difficulty. We have now on our hands a *number* of groups; but what are they doing, in the way that concerns the sociologist of knowledge? Are

they seething with solidarity and mutual bonhomie, stimulated thereto by an enlightened gregarious instinct? Far from it: they are in active and even bitter competition with each other. The old biological urges are still doing their work, and so effectively that they are responsible for this group conflict. It is the very urgency and competition for power to control satisfactions of instincts which calls the plurality of groups into existence. If we accept this account, nothing could prove more conclusively that the biological impulses are self-regarding. In themselves they could do anything but provide groups of loyal 'solidaires'. These groups, on Mannheim's general supposition, are simply prudential arrangements for individual advantage, nothing more than cunningly devised means to satisfy diverse egotisms. And this means, in regard to rationalisation, even more than Mannheim would admit. He sees a group's ideology as formulated *vis-à-vis* another actual or potential group; but this sees it as *vis-à-vis* the very members of any single group itself. There is no escape from this impasse so long as we find the bonds of group life, and consequently the determinants of group thinking, in blind biological instincts, even though these be rationalised. The only escape can be in some other kind of root impulse, equally native with those. So the question is, whether there is any evidence for this other kind of impulse. Perhaps rationalisation itself will direct us to it; and in any case, rationalisation is so central that it is worth looking into.

## II.

Mannheim does not use this word very much, but prefers to speak of 'perspectives', 'distortion', and 'false consciousness'. The general idea, however, is the same, except that a perspective expresses a distortion which is due to an *entirely* false consciousness, a distorting of the total mental structure of a group member, though without any suggestion of conscious deception. An individual's thinking simply cannot go straight to reality because of group interest, and this in



turn means blind biological interest. Several examples are given, of which one concerns the rise of Christianity. This was a revolt of suppressed strata against the Roman ruling classes; it was an ethical rather than a political revolt because the strata had no desire to rule, and it had a world outlook instead of being tribal, because of the disintegrated tribal structure of the Roman empire. Yet it pretended to have a religious and not an economic reason for its ethic, it professed to turn from the political sphere because of its felt citizenship in heaven, and it looked beyond Jew or Greek to mankind because of its belief in the fatherhood and sovereignty of God. All this, to the sociologist, was an unwittingly false consciousness. The oppressed strata had no real interest in religion and morality, but only in improving their economic condition under the pressure of unconscious biological urges.

An account like this simply clamours for closer scrutiny. One might ask whether the oppressed felt themselves to be oppressed. If they didn't, why did they rise; was this also just a 'blind' surge upwards? If they did, then the economic motive was in their consciousness and their revolt was not blind. It is of equal moment to ask why there should be rationalisation at all. This process would have already taken place, according to the general Mannheim hypothesis, on the part of the dominant classes and to give them an ideology. They for their part would also be squinting at the social realities in order to see only the facts which supported their security. The subjected group then follows suit; its oblique and utopian gaze fastens upon other realities which give justification to its demand for equal security—though we are told that it did not profess to want this security but only to be free to enjoy and propagate its religious beliefs.

But the central point is that the distortion, whether by ruling or oppressed classes, was in the guise of a *justification*. Now the peculiar feature of a justification is, that it moves from one particular thing to something beyond, it views a fact in a wider context. If I am simply out to make money and can see nothing else, it will never occur to me to justify

myself. Fact and context will here coincide, and my justification will lie implicitly in the activity itself, which will go ahead without doubt or fear. Where justification comes in there must be some uneasiness, initial at least, about the rights of one's position; one must see some wider setting which prompts criticism and raises the question of value. It would be in this way that both dominant and oppressed classes would rationalise their procedures. And to do so, they must have possessed, with equal naturalness, the capacity both to have a particular biological urge and also to see a wider context within which to criticise the urge. Both capacities must be there *at once*, and it is precisely their juxtaposition which constitutes a *rational* situation, *i.e.*, the knowledge of a particular case in the light of a general scheme or principle. To be rational is to be able to do exactly that; and so rationalisation is direct testimony to the co-equal presence and force of both reason and impulse. But even this is too mild a statement. It may be true that reason and impulse are equal in force, but it is just as true that reason is superior in *authority*: it is before its standard that the rights of impulse must be justified. So that men rationalise, not—as the Freudians and Mannheim would have us believe—merely because they have blind urges, but also because they are rational, and in so doing they pay tribute to the prestige if not to the power of reason.

Here we have that root impulse which we have seen to be necessary if blind self-seeking instincts were to yield to a group-forming influence. It is of the nature of reason (and not of instinct) to see the general as much as the particular, the group as much as the individual, and thus to generate group solidarity and whatever group thinking there may be. Amongst the biological urges we cannot safely identify an urge to *think*, and Mannheim is in agreement with this when he admits that such urges "can never reach the level of meaning and can never be internally understood". Clearly, however, a person with a perspective is thinking, even if squinting; and we are told that the business of sociology of



knowledge is to investigate meanings, in the light of social groupings and historical situations.<sup>1</sup> So that when dealing with men we cannot escape placing the logical beside the biological. Nor can we escape this in dealing with men living, acting, and thinking in groups. The independent logical urge has an associative tendency, for it naturally sees the particulars *together*, through their general features. When the early Christians banded together, no doubt there was an emotional attraction, but there was also an intellectual content which had a centripetal effect. They felt and also believed certain things in common, and they had a common aim which was intelligibly expressible. Their urge to come together did reach the level of meaning and become internally understood, because it had a cognitive aspect which shed a clarifying light. Through this element could their movement develop its force into a drive with a coherent purpose; mere gregariousness or any other blind impulse would not have done this.

But still we will be told that all this was but an unconscious screen for their real purpose, which was an economic place in society. The actual function of reason is not to clarify but to distort, though the person concerned will imagine that he is seeing clearly. These Christians spoke of a heavenly city, of a universal Father, of a divine Jesus, of salvation from sin, and other such things, but their biological hearts were set upon treasure on earth. Although like their own first martyr they might seem to be looking up steadfastly into heaven, if you followed the line of their vision you would find that it curved right back again to earth. An empty and indifferent heaven deflected it sharply back to a full and desirable world. For in truth the heavens are void of transcendental beings (as man in his 'unconscious' is well aware), and human aims are very earthy. And yet Mannheim seems to hesitate to go so far, as we may gather from several passages in his work. Side by side with his insistence that reality has the historical form, just as thinking itself is

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<sup>1</sup> *E.g., op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

dialectical, there is the admission that "human life is always something more than it was discovered to be in any one historical period or under any given set of social conditions, and that even after these have been accounted for there still remains an eternal spiritual realm beyond history, which is never quite subsumed under history itself, and which puts meaning into history and into social experience".<sup>1</sup> This is the opposite pole to the realm of the blindly biological, and "everything historical seems in fact to lie between these two extreme poles". Its full determination comes from the spiritual as well as from the material realm, so that from neither of them in separation can we understand any concrete historical event. Yet the mode of understanding seems different in the two cases, for Mannheim is prepared to grant that "mystical experience is the only adequate means for revealing man's ultimate nature to himself".<sup>2</sup> Now the early Christians claimed to have mystical experience, through which they became convinced of God, of Jesus, and of all which followed in their creed. (They also went some way to satisfy Mannheim otherwise, when he insisted that God had become incarnated into the historical process.) Perhaps, after all, the heaven which they peopled was not empty, and the line of their vision may well have gone straight through to reality. In this case they were not deluded about their objective, and the rational explication of their vision was not merely a justification of attempts to satisfy their economic hunger. It looks as if they really might hunger and thirst after righteousness as well.

### III.

If now we follow Mannheim's usual practice, and turn away again from the spiritual realm, the description which we are asked to accept, in the interests of a sociology of knowledge, is not without other dubious elements. In this description there are three outstanding points of reference.

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 82.



There is the biological order, the historical social process, and the activity of thinking. The first of these is unchanging, but the other two are not. It is the defect of every ideology to imagine that there can be a permanent *status quo* in human affairs, just as it is one of the outstanding merits of Marxism to insist that social life, indeed all reality, is ever on the move. But here it is worth notice that the utopian mentality, though it avoids the error of ideology, falls into another which is its opposite: it wants to see the whole of history as process and on the move, overlooking the fact that there are some permanent achievements, and that flux is not the entire character of social living. If it were, and if our thinking were similarly fluxional, there could be no knowledge or evaluation of history or of anything else. Pure change, on the side of either social process or of thinking mind, and still more on the side of both, means pure unintelligibility. "History as history", says Mannheim, "is unintelligible unless certain of its aspects are emphasised in contrast to others. This selection and accentuation of certain aspects of historical totality may be regarded as the first step in the direction which ultimately leads to an evaluative procedure and to ontological judgments."<sup>1</sup> We are given no examples of this, but it seems to mean that historical process has typical features, and thought likewise. Thinking must have a fixed structure within which it arranges its materials to give them meaning, so that there are limits to the distortion of a 'total' ideology, which otherwise, we are told, involves an entire twisting of mental structure.

We have already seen that Mannheim gives a wide interpretation to the idea of a group: it includes generations, status groups, occupational groups, sects, schools, etc. Furthermore, there are greater and lesser groups, and some are inclusive and others included. What then is the effect upon thinking and perspectives when one person is a member of two or more groups, or when a number of persons are together in some groups but separated in their membership

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

of others? This is what frequently happens. There would be little difficulty if the groups could be arranged neatly as a set of concentric circles of ever widening diameter; this would symbolise a unity of thinking and perspective with differences only in the range of application. But in addition to this kind of arrangement, we have circles that intersect with a partially common area, and others that are entirely external to one another. Mannheim seems to contemplate only the first and third of these possibilities: either entire agreement within a dominating point of view, with no more variation than of detailed emphasis, or entire conflict of perspectives with nothing in common. But there is the second possibility. Persons who in some important respect have different outlooks still live in the same world, they may be members of the same nation (a kind of group, by the by, of which Mannheim has little to say), and they may have common interests in sporting activities, cultural subjects, humanitarian services, proper care of children, and so forth. While it is true even here that persons may congregate along the lines of major class or economic divisions, this is not inevitable. It is quite usual to find members of an association, for the purpose of maintaining common ground within it, agreeing not to obtrude the interests which take them into other groupings, such as the political or religious. No doubt this is sometimes difficult to carry through successfully, or without suggesting an artificial camaraderie, as when members of the one religious communion try to keep politics or business out of religion, and insist that their official spokesmen keep only to 'pure' Christianity. But there is enough to make us think that the all-or-nothing view of social cleavages is a misreading of the facts. If distinct groups are to be allowed their distinct sociological rights and their peculiar perspectives, this passing to and fro of individuals from 'extreme' groups into others of 'mediating' character, shows that perspectives may be co-ordinate in rank, and be consciously so in an individual's mind. It tells against the suppression of all perspectives save one, by the process of



rationalisation. It rather provides a stimulus, in the very clash of perspectives, to individual thinking which takes serious account of the conflicting claims, and to do this without either closing up into a single group shell or denouncing a conflicting group's point of view as a total distortion. It may even provide the opportunity to think one's way to a reconciliation of the view points, by the exercise of that reason which is the individual's native right as much as his group membership. This would mean that any party which insists on the absoluteness of class interest and struggle, and upon the rightness of revolutionary destruction in this struggle (as a purposed aim thereof) is doing a definite disservice to humanity; and this all the more when it does it in the name of philosophy. For philosophy is a rational enterprise, and reason in its true genius aims rather to comprehend differences than to destroy them. This course is more proper to a party which boasts of thinking with its blood, but which thereby has swung over to one of the extreme poles (the blind biological) which Mannheim mentions.

Of course, distinct groups may not be allowed their distinct sociological rights and their peculiar perspectives. They may all be resolved into variations on a single theme, and this is what Mannheim favours when, in Marxian spirit, he makes class cleavage the most significant form of social grouping, since economic production and domination are finally determinative. I must forbear from comment on this, save to remark that I simply do not believe in the theory of economic determinism, and that I do believe that there are groups which express fundamental needs other than the economic, and other indeed than the biological. We are really back to a former problem: how could there be even the semblance of groupings about diverse interests, if these interests were simply disguises for a single economic concern? The sociology of knowledge will not assist its scientific work if it begins with the prejudice that men really want only one thing, no matter what they say, and that their group life is only for the getting of this one thing. This is

quite other than the assumption that their thinking is affected by instinctive-emotional influences, which in turn are heightened by being felt by a number of *socii*. This is a legitimate working hypothesis, to be tried out on the facts to see how far it will go.

Those who emphasise the distortion of thinking, whether psychologists or sociologists, are monistic in regard to human motives; they favour their reduction to a single instinctive and unconscious impulse. This is in opposition to the plain man's belief that there is a plurality of co-ordinate motives and that conduct in its motivation is usually mixed. The plain man is hardly likely to believe this unless he could find some warrant for it in his experience. If what has been said in previous paragraphs about the plurality of group membership is substantially correct, especially in regard to intersecting groups, it goes to support this common conviction. Often it seems to be too readily assumed that what happens sometimes happens always, *i.e.*, that when there is a conflict of motives, all but one are repressed into the unconscious, whence they exert a powerfully modifying influence upon the motive which has been allowed to remain on the conscious stage. If the testimony of introspection is valid at all, it certainly tells of incompatible motives which remain together within the reach of consciousness. We are familiar with the defence of the enlightened Englishman against the charge of hypocrisy, in the plea that his race do really care for the idealistic ends which they profess, but that they care also for more tangible results, and that they try to obtain both at once. To be sure, there is a danger here, in that one motive may be twisted into the service of the other; then there will certainly be unwitting distortion. But we should not lightly assume either that this distortion is always in the disreputable direction, or even that it must take place at all.

This issue has been before us already, in considering the causes and reasons for the rise of Christianity; there it was submitted that the single concealed motive was not adequate to bear the whole burden of explanation. It can now be added



that the *bona fides* of the early Christians need not be impugned had they hoped (which is by no means obvious) to secure their earthly welfare in addition to their heavenly future, and had they had both objectives in mind. Again, marriage is a relationship which satisfies several needs of varying character, and the wise person is he who enters upon it open-eyed and with determination to make it satisfy all the relevant needs and not merely one of them. And I believe that what so often happens on the political stage tells in the same direction. It is commonly acknowledged that there is a large mass of the electorate not firmly attached to any party, and that the business of parties is to woo and win this large floating vote. If we followed Mannheim we should believe that the politicians are quite astray in this matter—and also if we acquiesced in the opinion of one of our leading Australian dailies, which recently defended the Broadcasting Commission's censorship of certain talks, on the ground that the community is neatly divided between Right and Left, and that on each side it has made up its mind beyond any influence from the radio. The fact that this is a false picture means that reasoned appeals still have their function, and that, for instance, an elector is not exhibiting total distortion if, while being on the whole a sympathiser with one party, he yet votes on a specific occasion for the opposite party. This person may well be an unconscious monist, but in quite another sense from that of our sociologist of knowledge. He may be trying to submit to the monistic governance of reason, and to subserve the single reasonable end of his country's greatest good. To say that what he really wants is simply the economic advantage of his group or himself, is to make a totally gratuitous concession to cynicism. Over against the monism of the blindly biological there must be placed the monism of the reasonable; better still is it to assert a single monism which embraces both, giving at least equality to each in respect to force, but priority to the rational in respect to authority.

## IV.

One of the leading features of the sociology of knowledge is that it places existing modes of thought in a context of collective action, in the conviction that through such action "we first discover the world in an intellectual sense", as Mannheim puts it. Here is shown the combined influence of much recent psychology, of Pragmatist philosophy, and of the Marxian principle that theory is a function of the process of becoming. Mannheim believes that in this respect Marxism is a sound guide, and that "for the modern man pragmatism has become in some respects the inevitable and appropriate outlook". This, of course, is a reaction against intellectualism with its pronounced emphasis on the *a priori*. It is an abandonment of the view that the mind, with fixed ways of knowing (categories), is confronted by a reality of unchanging character, so that it may find the truth about reality in a permanently valid way. The fixity is removed from both sides of this relationship. Reality, especially in its historical form, never stands still, and thought alters in accord with behaviour in changed circumstances. What is altered is not merely the things about which men think, but also the very modes in which they think about them. The principal point is that ideas follow action, and then affect it only in a derivative and reflexive way, instead of preceding action as its necessary standard and guide.

The governing biological point of view is apparent in this. Action derives in the last resort from the instinctive, and we have noticed already how instinctive impulsion is said to segregate men into groups. The groups cluster around some biological need, preferably of the economic sort, and as the members become aware of this need they may become a definite party driving forward to secure their aim. They will express a case to themselves and to the world representing their thinking on the matter, and it may appear that this is the cause and reason for their party activities. Actually, the process is reversed: the parties shape their thought to suit their action, which in turn springs from biological need. We

do foolishly if we are disturbed at this, for it is the only way in which thinking can arise. Knowledge is the product and the servant of action. We must actively explore the world to know anything about it. And because the world is always on the go, it is vain to depend on what others have come to know in the past. For instance, "the moral interpretation of one's own action is invalid, when, through the forces of traditional modes of thought and conceptions of life, it does not allow for the accommodation of action and thought to a new and changed situation, and in the end actually obscures and prevents this adjustment and transformation of man".<sup>1</sup> It is not that there are two distinct realms, of the real and of minds, out of whose conjunction comes knowledge as a third entity. There is but the one world of dynamically moving events, some of which are human activities, into which knowledge comes during the activities and to help them on. As this world movement is perpetually changing, both activities and knowledge change with it. In so far as there is any distinction, it is the business of human action to adjust itself to its active world, and knowledge has its function to this end. The key idea is that of adjustment to historically dynamic situations.

Looking closer, we find that there are two kinds of human action, and consequently two types of party behaviour. Mannheim gives a particular connotation to 'conduct', which he marks off from 'administrative' (or 'reproductive') activity. Apparently there is an inclination in the mind to find fixity in the flux, and this, strangely enough, in the interests of action. "The derivation of our meanings emphasises and stabilises that aspect of things which is relevant to activity and covers up, in the interests of collective action, the perpetually fluid process underlying all things . . . Every concept represents a sort of taboo against other possible sources of meaning, simplifying and unifying the manifoldness of life for the sake of action."<sup>2</sup> This reads

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 20.



like a passage from Bergson. This kind of thing takes place for the sake of collective action, and so political parties are prone to it. To fight an issue, it is necessary to define it sharply and to ascribe permanent value to it. In party warfare it would never do to admit that a programme might be inadequate to next week's situation. In political matters there is also another consideration. In conducting the day to day business of government there is much which appears to repeat itself, and the administrative mind is most at ease when it can treat in this way as many situations as possible. It always tends to force novel situations under accepted formulæ. This is one kind of action, but it is not *conduct*, it is not the kind of behaviour which politics really calls for. The moving human scene cannot be rationalised away like this. It is constantly throwing up situations which are genuinely new and irrational, to which no formulæ from the past are adequate if there is to be full adjustment. Conduct is the action which adjusts itself adequately to the new and irrational, and it is this kind which is properly named political and is the proper concern of politics. So thought is of two principal types. It may be rationalising and conservative, tending towards eternal truths and fixed categories and the a priori, and easily producing ideologies. Or it may be adventurous and experimental, diving boldly into the flux in order to master its irrationalities: "knowledge always has to retain its experimental character if it wishes to do justice to new sets of facts".<sup>1</sup>

We must try to get our bearings in all this—taking the risk that an attempt to get one's bearings is symptomatic of 'false consciousness'. Towards the end of the last paragraph a reader might have expected the statement that, as the first-named type of thinking made for ideology, so the second kind produced utopianism. Mannheim's treatment of the utopian mentality would justify such an expectation, and in general he ought to say that this is what such mentality means. But we are left in doubt, and for two reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

The second type is evidently meant to be thinking in its genuineness, and this is clearly at odds with making it responsible for the utopian kind of distortion. The other reason for perplexity is in the account of fascism. This account is part of a general—and very illuminating—exposition of the five main kinds of political attitude or perspective: the bureaucratic-conservative, the conservative-historical, the liberal-democratic, the socialist-communist, and the fascist. The broad difference between this latter and the other four may be described in terms of their differing attitudes to the time process. The other four emphasise either the past or the future in its bearing on the present, but fascism scorns to look far behind or ahead in its concentration upon the present growing point. The fascist seizes and maintains power by exploiting the crises which constantly beset modern society in its period of transformation. "In the degree that this period contains within itself the irrational factors of modern social and economic life, it attracts the irrational explosive elements in the human mind."<sup>1</sup> At the heart of fascism lies the apotheosis of direct action, the belief in the decisive deed. "The essence of politics is to recognise and grapple with the demands of the hour. Not programmes are important, but unconditional subordination to a leader."<sup>2</sup> Mannheim concludes that this is a complete irrationalism which negates every interpretation of history. There is evidence that he rates it pretty low amongst the political perspectives, in so far as it differs from the others in being blind to "the structural development and the integrated framework of society". They are all distortions, but this is more distorting than the rest. But doesn't it give Mannheim just what he requires for genuine action—eschewing norms or goals from past or future and preoccupied with the immediately irrational—and also for valid thinking, which is adjustment to the immediate situation? What can be his complaint, if any, against it? Presumably in that very respect in which it differs from the other distortions; but if so, then

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 119.

either this respect is not in itself a distortion, or (which is perhaps the same thing) it is a modifying influence upon distortion. In plain words, the assigning to historical process of a structure and a framework is a just description, *i.e.*, "history is not merely a heterogeneous succession of events in time, but a coherent interaction of the most significant factors", and "an intelligible scheme".<sup>1</sup>

A perspective which fails to see the intelligible must do so through failure to use intelligence. Fascism, then, despite its readiness to act on the immediately irrational, fails to exhibit thinking at all. What it does instead, as one of its variants boasts, is to 'think' with its blood. But should this not be congenial to Mannheim's derivation of thought via action from blind biological instinct? It ought to be, but one suspects that it is not, on reading his account of the technique of the fascist leader. To produce the desired social explosion, the leader appeals direct to the primitive feeling of the mass and plays on their irrationality. He thus causes an emotional outburst which carries him to power. It is in the midst of telling us this that Mannheim makes that reference to the blindly biological, which we have so often noted. But he juxtaposes to this sub-historical element a spiritual transcendental element which also influences historical events, and which is equally incapable of being reduced to explicit meaning and intelligibility. We hereby find what does satisfy Mannheim—that "everything historical seems in fact to lie between these two extreme poles. If we attempt to view the interrelations of phenomena from this middle ground, we never get to see what lies above and below history. If, on the other hand, we stand at either of these irrational, extreme poles, we completely lose sight of historical reality in its concreteness".<sup>2</sup> There is a puzzle arising here, as to *where* we are to stand, if we are to see at all; but there can be no doubt that *what* we see is threefold, *i.e.*, historical events, and the determining elements above and

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 128.



below. These latter are both of them unchanging and irrational; but this is strange to comprehend about the element 'above', since it is the fascist neglect of this and its concentration on the 'below' which causes it to find history unintelligible. Of course, the fascist is interested in the unchanging 'below' only as it appears on the surface in changing events, but this need cause him to misread only its native unchangeableness and not its irrationality. The basic question, however, is: where does the intelligibility of history come from? There seem to be only two possible sources. It may come as a kind of emergent product from two irrationals. In so far as it has a structure (to give it intelligibility) this is understandable, as the two irrationals are unchanging; but in so far as it is intelligible, this is not so clear to see. Or the factor determining intelligibility will be one of the three, *i.e.*, events themselves, the 'above', or the 'below'. But events in their concreteness are irrational, and so is the blindly biological which is 'below'. We are left to follow "the great tradition" in philosophy, which finds the source of intelligibility in the rational, which in turn is in the 'above'. In any case, the intelligibility of history is bound up with both its structural features and our rationalisation of it; which strongly suggests the giving to 'rationalisation' another and an older interpretation than the Freudian.

So if historical reality is not flux pure and simple, conduct is not wholly concerned with the irrational, nor can thinking merely be the after-effect of conduct. Mannheim is insistent that men, individually or in groups, look for meaning in a process, that a process is meaningless unless it shows definite situations and goals, and that adjustment must be adjustment to something other than itself. He charges much psychology with missing fire in this respect, in that it atomises mental life into a process of isolated events, properly provoking such a revulsion as Gestalt theory represents. And in group life it is necessary "to fix the attention of those men who wish to do something upon a certain 'definition of the

situation'".<sup>1</sup> This means that they must think in order to act (and not vice versa), and that thinking fixes on elements of constancy which Mannheim admits, though deprecatingly, are rational.

It means also that reality is not just a single process of dynamically moving events, some of which are human activities, into which knowledge comes during the activities to help them out. Knowledge stands off from the activities, and is aware of itself as doing so: that is its differentia. It may readily be admitted that knowledge stands off thus, not merely to mirror the process, for that would make it quite otiose. It has a close relation to activity, but in the way of finding meanings and goals for it and of guiding it thereto. This standing-off of knowledge must be insisted on, for, strictly speaking, while one is acting one is not also thinking, or if one is doing this, it is a thinking ahead of the actually present action: it is a looking to the outcome, which perhaps will modify the present action. This is what happens in a game or contest. Here, a good deal of the action is matter of habit, according to the skill of the actor, and habituated action can be used so as to free the mind to meet novel situations. Mannheim seems to think that it must always function so as to draw attention entirely to itself. But if attention can be freed from present action towards that which is to come, it follows that thinking behaves naturally as it precedes action. To be sure, one may learn as one goes on, and this may react back upon thought. What it thus does is to change the plan of action, *i.e.*, to stimulate fresh thinking as a necessary basis for fresh and successful action. Activity takes place within some 'gestalt'. Tactics are subordinate to strategy, even when they provoke a change in it. It would be useful to apply the foregoing individual analysis to groups, but Mannheim has relieved us of this necessity by disowning anything like a group-mind.

The element of fixity which reality must have in its make-up is matched by a similar element in thinking. By

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

consequence there must be, in some real sense, the *one* world for all groups. These no doubt have their perspectives, and equally is it without doubt that their thinking may be distorted. To accept this and to trace out its detailed workings is a necessary and profitable study, justifying the enterprise of a sociology of knowledge. But this enterprise will be vain if it so interprets knowledge as to destroy it, *i.e.*, if it splits the one world into as many disjointed parts as there are separate groups. If groups could coexist in such a condition, they could not even have so much inter-communication as to fight each other. They could have no communication at all, and the function of language would be an insoluble riddle. But it is no riddle to Mannheim. He says that "the word and the meaning that attaches to it is truly a collective reality . . . When, in communicating with others, we seek a common level of understanding, the word can be used to iron out individual differences of meaning. But, when necessary, the word may become an instrument in emphasising the differences in meaning and the unique experiences of each individual. It may then serve as a means for detecting the original and novel increments that arise in the course of the history of culture, thereby adding previously imperceptible values to the scale of human experience".<sup>1</sup> Words apparently show a reciprocity between group experience and that of individuals, for which they must move within the one world of meanings. And this use of language has a bearing on the nature of knowledge and the process of history. There must be 'a common level of understanding' if men are to act together in the ways that form history. When they act experimentally in new ways, it is perhaps to restore a breach in the common understanding; but in any case, if their experiments are of value, they are received into the common store of knowledge, whose commonness cannot be restricted within the limits of a group, but is available to all.

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<sup>1</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 74.



## REALISM AND MEMORY.

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By D. TAYLOR.

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MEMORY is commonly held along with hallucinations and imagination to be one of the chief difficulties in the way of complete realism. I wish to maintain the precise opposite of that contention, that the fact of memory provides us with the strongest evidence in support of a realist theory of knowledge. My method has been, first to state and defend what I take to be the fundamental principles of realism, second to apply these principles to the perception of objects, and third to consider memory as a special type of such perception. I have assumed a fundamental similarity between the acts of perception and imagination, memory and expectation.

I think the first principle of Realism is the proposition that in any act of knowing the subject is distinct from the object. Alexander makes this point when he says that "In each case" (of experience) "the -ing and the -ed are distinguishable and the -ed is non-mental and in some cases patently physical." Alexander, however, goes beyond what is required by realism in the assertion that the -ed is non-mental, and his subsequent distinction between cognate and non-cognate objects serves Ducasse as a basis for an attack on the principle itself. Ducasse contends in *Mind* of April, 1936, that to see a sight or to hear a sound is precisely parallel to dancing a dance, that blue is a species of the genus sights just as the waltz is a species of the genus dance, and that consequently as we can waltz a waltz so we can blue a blue and even pale blue a pale blue. But his whole defence of the identification of subject and object rests on a proposition which he says is "too obvious to require argument", the proposition that tasting is a

species of experiencing. Far from being obvious the proposition owes any plausibility it may possess to an ambiguity. The statement that A is a species of B may symbolise the proposition "Waltzing is a species of dancing" or the proposition "Professional dancing is a species of dancing". But the first division is based on the sorts of activity which may be called dancing and the second on the purposes for which one may dance. The question at issue is whether seeing and hearing are to be taken as species of experiencing in the sense that waltzing is a species of dancing, or in the sense in which professional dancing is a species of dancing. The realist asserts that seeing is a species of experiencing only in the sense that it has a particular sort of object.

The second principle of realism is that all knowledge is derived from experience—that no knowledge is innate or categorical. This principle is denied by those who hold that it is possible to separate the form of things from their material whether they attribute all form to the action of the mind in knowing, or merely certain forms. Kant is the most thorough exponent of the first position. It is possible, I believe, to refute this position in two propositions, first that it is impossible to possess character without possessing form, and second that it is impossible to form the unformed. It is not so easy to refute those philosophers who assert some forms only to be categorical. These admit that some forms do exist in the world and are to be found in experience. They deny that all forms are found there, e.g. cause and pastness. Let us take cause first. Berkeley is responsible for the trouble. But Berkeley nowhere denies the regularity of causal succession. He denies only its necessity, its intelligibility. He denies that there is anything in the causal relationship which compels the mind to move from the cause to the effect, and this is Hume's position. Kant's solution is no solution. Suppose it to be the case that the mind can only know objects in causal connection. It thereupon follows that all objects known must be causally connected—but the necessity of that connection rests upon their being known, not upon their

nature. They are necessarily connected, but their connection is not necessary. There is nothing here to justify the mind in moving from one event to another.

Broad asserts both cause and pastness to be categorical. "We are", he says, "so constituted that when we are subjects of a cognitive situation whose objective constituent manifests the characteristic of familiarity we inevitably apply the concept of pastness.

"Familiarity is an empirical characteristic and pastness is a categorical characteristic; but the former 'means' the latter to such beings as we are; and this 'meaning' is primitive and unacquired, in the sense that it is not, like most meaning, due to the repeated manifestation of the two characteristics together." He expresses a doubt with which I heartily agree whether the reader will accept his suggestion. How to describe 'familiarity' except in terms of pastness Broad does not explain. Presumably he would limit the relation between familiar things to similarity. But that would involve us in attributing pastness to all similar objects. The chief objection to pastness as a category is the impossibility of making time an empirical characteristic of the real world and pastness a categorical one. And if time is to be made categorical, cause must also be categorical. It is inconceivable that a relation so completely bound up with change could be a natural characteristic of the world and time a mind imposed characteristic.

There are two corollaries of this second principle. The first asserts that our only test of reality is experience, and the second that the sort of reality a thing has is determined by the characteristics it possesses. Alexander offends against this second principle when he asserts that the -ed is always non-mental. Realism distinguishes the mental from the non-mental not in any high *a priori* fashion, but by the characteristics they possess. Thinking is distinct from other activities because thinking is governed by principles; other activities by laws; thinking is right or wrong; other activities are simply fact.



When we try to distinguish between what we think and what we think about our answer is not, therefore, in terms either of pure sensations, whose very existence is doubtful, or physical objects whose very title begs the question. The essential difference between what we think and what we think about is that the first, what we think, has truth value and the second has not. It is, in Cook Wilson's phrase, "What is taken for granted", the given. The point is an important one. Idealists such as Bradley have continually denied the existence of a world independent of thought just because they had no clear conception of thought itself. The inherited confusion between subject and object infected the mind with the qualities of its objects and made such a clear conception impossible. I believe that the whole difference of opinion between realist and idealist may be traced to two questions of fact, first what is the distinguishing characteristic of thought? and second does perception contain an element of thought or not? To the first of these questions realism answers "thinking is distinguishable from other activities in that it is determined by reasons not causes, and consequently by its character of being right or wrong". If the mind in its commerce with the world is able to take anything for granted, to accept a situation without thought, that which is taken for granted cannot be described as either true or false, and must, therefore, be accepted as simply real. Such a given need not, of course, be simple. It depends entirely upon what we can, or cannot, take for granted.

If when I perceive the book on the table, the pink rat lurking behind the bottle, the reflection of the fire in the bottle itself, I do so entirely without thought, the book, the pink rat, the reflection in the bottle, must all be accepted as real. At first blink this may seem a hard saying, but in fact nobody has ever completely denied the reality of books, pink rats, and reflections. The critic of realism admits that the drunkard, as much as the teetotaller, does see something, and that what he sees is real, but he suggests either that both see

less than they think they see, or that neither think they see book, pink rat, or reflection. In either case all that is actually seen is a coloured patch, and to this presentation the mind adds other qualities, either by inference or in some other fashion. The view that my awareness of the book is an inference from a coloured patch is obviously not true. And the attempt to get over the obstinacy of fact by describing it as an unconscious inference is no better. As Broad says, it means at most "that we reach without inference the kind of conclusion which could be defended by inference if it were challenged". On the other hand, I do not find the theory put forward by Broad any more intelligible. "The drunkard", he says, "means by 'pink rats' something which last beyond the duration of the perceptual situation, which could be felt as well as seen and felt by other men, which would eat corn and excite fox-terriers". Again, he says that all perceptual situations claim that their objective constituents are parts of larger and more enduring wholes. I can make little of this second assertion. The use of the term 'claim' to describe a character of a perceptual situation seems to me thoroughly inappropriate.

His first statement does need careful consideration. He contends that the drunkard means by "pink rats" something more than the objective constituent of a perceptual situation. His language is again ambiguous, but since the statement follows immediately after his criticism of inference conscious and unconscious, as an explanation of perception, we are justified in assuming that he intends to assert that the drunkard sees more than a pink patch. He sees a pink rat, not necessarily as Broad seems to assume, a fox-terrier's rat, but in any case more than a pink patch. If now, we suppose that only the coloured patch is real we must admit (i) that the drunkard sees what is not, (ii) that he adds to the real pink patch unreal qualities of his own. There is, of course, no difficulty in *thinking that* something is the case, when in fact it is not the case, but there is a very serious difficulty in asserting that

we see something when that something is non-existent. It is for this reason that common-sense says that the drunkard doesn't really see the pink rat; he only thinks that he sees it. There is a second difficulty. The drunkard, and the teetotaler, too, are said to add to the objective constituent unreal qualities of their own. What ontological status have these qualities?

Once it is realised that that which is accepted without thought is unquestionable, our difficulties are over. We need no longer strain language to express a relation obviously not mental in sufficiently mental terms to admit of error. Unconscious inference—claim—interpretation go by the board.

Our acceptance of the reality of both the original element and the added element in perception does not remove the need for an examination of the relation between those two elements. It does, by clearing away misconceptions give us a much better prospect of success. Assuming the reality of the added element in perception, there are, it seems to me, two possible accounts. We may as before assert that the added element is an inference from the original, but the assertion would now be gratuitous as well as opposed to fact: or we may assert that the relation of original element to the added element is the relation of sign to significant. The term "sign" is unfortunately ambiguous. The statement that "A" is the sign of "B" may mean that "B" can be inferred from "A". It is in its other sense that I propose to use it. In this sense, to say that "A" is the sign of "B" is to say that the being presented with "A" results automatically in the being presented with "B". On Broad's theory of memory an image which exists now enables us to be aware of a past object. The image is a sign of that past object in the sense used above.

Precisely how the sign of an object is able to refer to that object we need not determine. The point about which it is essential to be clear is that whether the sign causes me to become aware of something other than the sign, or causes



that something other to be presented to me, the relation is a causal, not a rational one. There is, therefore, no question of truth or error in the presentation or in the relation between sign and significant. Whatever initiates my awareness of the pink rat, and it is almost certainly not a pink patch, is not a ground for that awareness. The pink rat has neither truth nor falsity. It is.

Even if you are prepared to identify subject and object—to say that we perceive in a pink rat fashion—you are more likely to approximate the mind to nature than nature to the mind. Instead of giving truth value to reality you will take it away from thought. The act of mind in creating its object (if it does create it) is not a rational act based on evidence, and consequently it cannot be true or false. And this is still true if you hold that the sign brings into being a mental image.

The acceptance of the reality of the given, defined as that which is taken for granted, is not as hard as it seems at first sight to be, even if we are so careless as to be given pink rats. Givens are the material with which the mind has to deal. Its task is to analyse, compare and relate them. The task will not be made more difficult by the presence of pink rats and reflections in their ranks. On the contrary, it would be impossible without them. Wild data, as Broad calls them, exist in what is possibly a wild world. They obey laws as regular as the laws of so called tame data; frequently the same laws. They are essential to the comprehension of the tame data themselves. The reflections of the mirror determine it in its character as a mirror.

Realism then, denies that "what we think about" is a combination of a given and the interpretation of that given, whether interpretation is thought of as an inference from the given, or as the addition of imagery to the given. It replaces that pseudo-rational relationship by a purely causal sign significant relationship. The colours and lights of ice signify

its coldness; the reflections of the mirror its smoothness and fragility.

The sign relation is a triadic not a dyadic one. It is possible to say that "A" is a sign of "B" only for a person "C". It is not at all clear, however, in what respect a person is a term in that relation. He may be a term as a conscious mind, or as possessing a nervous system. In the first case we would have to say that in order to perceive an object through symbolic reference the object must have been perceived before; in the second that sign and significant should have been related through the nervous system of the percipient. It is clear that one or other connection with the self is necessary, and that in neither case is the relation one which involves thinking in the percipient.

If we accept the first account the proposition just stated is no more than the assertion that it is impossible to perceive indirectly what has not been perceived directly. It follows that the significant in any case of symbolic reference must have been perceived in the past. What precise value are we to attach to the statement that the significant has been perceived in the past? Does it mean that the sign causes us to perceive a past object in abstraction from its pastness, for example, the coldness, I felt when I touched that piece of ice last July, without reference to the occasion on which I touched it? Or does it mean that the sign causes me to perceive a present object which is identical with a past object in all points except its date? Are we aware, in apperception, of a past object in abstraction from its pastness, or of a present object similar to a past object in every respect except its pastness?

If we take the second account we shall say that the significant must have been related to the sign through a nervous system, at some time in the past, and precisely the same question arises. Do we mean the actual significant or merely an entity the same in all points except time? So long as we confine our attention to perception it is not easy to decide which

view is closer to the truth. If anything the second is perhaps more likely. When we consider memory, however, we shall see that there are good reasons for preferring the first.

So far I have been concerned only with apperception, and particularly with two questions—the first, Are immediate sense-givens real? and the second, Are mediate sense-givens real? On the first question, I argued that immediate sense-givens are real on the ground that everything that exists must be real. I further urged that the only method by which we may decide the nature of a thing is to determine the characteristics it possesses. The characteristics possessed by immediate sense-givens are frequently not mental. A denial of the reality of mediate sense-givens depends upon the possibility of asserting their ideality, but whatever ideality may mean, it must involve the possession of truth value. Mediate sense-givens can be neither true nor false. The possibility that mediate sense-givens are physical images remains open.

Before we consider possible theories of memory it is necessary to make certain elementary distinctions. In memory we are in some way presented with the past, but not all presentation of the past is memory. We must distinguish between presentation of the past as past, and presentation of the past either as present or in abstraction from time. We are presented with the past when we observe Sirius but we are not presented with it as past. Memory requires that the past should be presented as past. Again, it is conceivable that the past may be presented as past either directly or indirectly; we may have either an immediate past sense-given or a mediate past sense-given. Memory is the presentation of a mediate past sense-given. I cannot remember what I have never experienced.

There are at least five possible ways of accounting for such presentations, two of them based on the two theories of apperception discussed above. Three make use of images and may be divided as the images are described as mental, neutral or physical. All three assert that the presentation of past



sense-givens is mediated by the presentation of an image, which is said to be like the past sense-given. As we have seen, however, the word "mediate" is ambiguous. My knowledge of Brown may be mediated by my knowledge of Smith in the sense that the second is a condition of the first or in the sense that my knowledge of Smith is also knowledge of Brown. Knowledge of the past by means of an image said to resemble that past is usually held to be mediated in this second sense. Its weakness lies in the fact that it at once requires that the agent should be able to compare the image and the original, and makes it completely impossible for him to make that comparison. There is a second difficulty in that since the image is like the past object in all respects except time, there is no means by which the object of memory can be dated, surely a fatal defect in a theory of memory. It is impossible even to place the object in the past. Attempts have been made to do this by adding to the presented image a feeling, sometimes described as a feeling of pastness or of familiarity. But a feeling either of pastness or familiarity is itself inconceivable unless we have independent knowledge of the past, and quite incapable of justifying a belief in, or knowledge of the past, unless we know it to be occasioned by the actual past. And this knowledge the theory makes *a priori* impossible.

Broad's position is extraordinary. To overcome the first of the difficulties mentioned he uses "mediate" in its true symbolic sense. An image enables us to know the past, not through its resemblance to that past, but through its capacity to refer us to the actual object. A memory image is on his view merely a condition of our being presented with the actual past-sense-given. There is consequently no difficulty in comparing the past sense-given with the memory image, though why we should bother to do so is a trifle obscure. On top of this, however, Broad offers an escape from the second difficulty by making pastness a category. Surely if it is possible to be presented with the actual past sense-given, there is no need for such a defence. The difficulty of dating an object in the

past arose from the claim that memory was restricted to awareness of a present image. If we can perceive the object in the past, we can also see its forbears and its successors, and so place it in its temporal setting. The whole assumption of a memory image, if that image is a sign only of its object, is an unnecessary complication. A sign does not need to be like its object in order to refer to it. There is, therefore, no reason why the immediate sense-given, the reminder as we call it, should not directly refer us to the past object, rather than through a totally unnecessary image.

The description of the image as mental, physical, or neutral adds further difficulties to those already considered. If the image is mental or neutral we must ask what we mean by "mental" or "neutral" and decide how a mental or a neutral object can be like a physical one. If we make our image physical, we multiply nature every time we remember.

Two other theories remain, the theory that memory is an inference from a present sense-given to a past sense-given, and the theory that it is the presentation of a past sense-given mediated by the presentation of a present sense-given, acting as a sign of the past object. We should notice that on both these views immediate past-sense givens are essential. It is as impossible to have indirect presentation of a past sense-given, without such presentation having also been direct, as it is to infer a past object from a present without independent knowledge of it. If memory, in spite of appearances to the contrary, is an inference from a present sense-given to a past object, that inference must be based on a perceived necessary connection between the past object and the present sense-given. Such a connection can only be perceived if the mind can know the past object, and since this knowledge is necessary to account for memory, know it directly independently of memory. It is quite clear that we do make inferences to the past from present sense-givens, but we should hardly call them memories. We should, in fact, consider memory necessary to their accomplishment. Inference from a present memory image to a past object presents precisely the same difficulties.

If memory is the presentation of a mediate past sense-given at the instance of a present immediate sense-given, the consequences are no different. The mediate sense-given must have been given immediately in the past. But it must also, in order to be perceived as past, have been presented as past. That is, it must have been presented in temporal relation to other immediate sense-givens, before and after. If it had not been so perceived, it would not now be possible to have it presented mediately in the relation of before and after, with other mediate sense-givens. But it is clear that it is impossible to perceive temporal relations without direct perception of the past as past. Thus memory, although not itself direct, implies a direct knowledge of the past.

Such direct immediate presentation of the past is necessary for more than memory. It is obvious that unless we can perceive a duration, we can perceive nothing. It is equally certain that a movement cannot be perceived unless that duration can be perceived as having temporal distinctions within it. And the same thing is true of the perception of music.

To determine what length of time can be directly perceived, we need to ask how a period of time can be held before the mind as one. There is a tendency illustrated by the psychologists of the specious present, to confuse the presented with the present and assume that what is presented is at least speciously present. They assume that an act of perception occupies only an instant of time, and through the confusion of subject and object, attribute this lack of extendedness in time, to the object. In order that a period of time should be presented as such, it is necessary that it should be presented as a whole. It is only when we have determined the conditions of such presentation, that we can discuss the amount of time that can be directly perceived.

We have become so accustomed to the language of representationalism that we find it difficult to realise that the theory that the object of knowledge, in imagination and memory, is an image, is a theory. We are inclined to treat



the existence of imagery as a sheer fact, as Broad does, and to regard the complete inability of philosophers to distinguish between images and sensations in descriptive terms, as due merely to insufficiently close observation. But the theory of images is merely a theory. It holds that there is an element in perception, imagination and memory that is real, but that this element is associated with mental images, which in the case of perception fill out the given real, and in memory are practically the whole object of knowledge.

Associationism as an attempt to explain thinking has been the subject of a good deal of deserved criticism, but associationism as a general name for the ability of associated objects to represent each other to the mind is an unquestionable fact. The theory of memory and perception put forward here might easily be described as associationism with two important modifications. It is not offered as an account of thinking. It is not held to relate subjective entities, but objective ones. For this reason there is in this account no tendency to regard associationism as anything other than causal. Experience is, I think, entirely in favour of this correction. Quite apart from *a priori* arguments it is quite clearly true that association of the sort we are considering is automatic. No less than I am bound by the environment I live in, to experience the objects I do, I am bound by my past experience to accept certain associations.

It is upon these facts that I base my realism, the fact that association does occur, although neither so broad nor so self-explanatory a principle as the associationists asserted, and the fact that such associations are not rational, but automatic. There are, it seems to me, two consequences of these facts. First, we are forced to admit the reality of objects of knowledge generally questioned because of the frequency with which we make false inferences from them. (I use the term frequency deliberately.) We are not always deceived. Only a few of us are deceived by reflections, and the better class drunkard does not set traps for his rats, but visits his doctor. Second,

we are provided with an instrument which will help us to understand apperception, memory, imagination, expectation, and if not thinking itself, at least the mechanical aids to thought.

Let it be supposed possible that a person being given one thing should perceive another, and we have a piece of machinery that will provide the basis for all of the above operations. The presentation of the present given (the reminder) results in my seeing an object in the past. In memory, I perceive the object in its temporal setting, paying particular attention to the fact that it is past. In imagination I perceive the same object in abstraction from its temporal setting, and am even able to consider it in a different temporal and spatial setting. In apperception and in expectation, I do not merely *consider* the object in a different temporal setting. I *perceive* it there. I may, of course, use this mechanism of association to do more than merely perceive the object in its new temporal position. I may be given a moving ball, be indirectly given the ball at a later position, and, observing that the relation between the two givens is a necessary one, infer the temporal position of the second. I may be directly given a scratching noise, be indirectly given, a dog, a cat, and a baby, and inferentially select the one which should be spatially and temporarily identified with the scratching. But it is obvious that in most cases of expectation, apperception and memory, I don't make such inferences. I take for granted the temporal position of the mediate given, as determined by that of the immediate given.

It is the tendency to abstraction mentioned earlier which is responsible for the attempts to differentiate the real from the imaginary by its superior distinctness, and vigour. The vagueness that we usually attribute to objects of memory is not so much vagueness as abstractness. We are not interested in the detail of the past. The present and the future are much more important. What we do want from the past is taken abstractly out of its context. I remember the knocker of the

door without the door: the colour of the door without its shape: the shape of the chair without its colour. Children whose interests are less narrow, and whose habits are not so abstract see the past in much more detail.

The classical account demands some such theory as an impression induced on the brain, or mind by the object. When the impression is first formed both it and the object exist together. The object may cease to exist immediately, but the impression merely grows more dim. It is only a brand new impression that can give us knowledge of the real world. Beyond my knowledge of the immediate present, I can know nothing. Looking at my rapidly fading impressions, I cannot even say, "These were once". To do that I should have to know enough of the past to be able to form the theory which prevents that knowledge.

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## THE STATUS OF SENSА.

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### II.

By W. A. MERRYLEES.

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### II.

Before proceeding to consider the relation between the perceptual appearance and the real object, I propose to consider whether Mr. Price in his book entitled "Perception", has shown any reason for modifying our conclusion as to the relation between the sensum and the perceptual appearance.

Mr. Price identifies the sensum (or, as he prefers to say, sense-datum) with what I have called the sense-presentation. I defined the sense-presentation as what I actually see while perceiving an object; for Mr. Price what I actually sense (in the case of vision, what I actually see) is the sense-datum. This, Mr. Price agrees, has a certain shape and size, which may remain constant despite variations in the shape and size of the retinal image. Mr. Price does not use any special term for what I have called the perceptual appearance, though he speaks of our mode of being conscious of it as *perceptual consciousness* and more specifically as *perceptual acceptance*.<sup>1</sup> The 'material thing' which he discusses in Chapter 6, however, is in fact simply the perceptual appearance. For the 'material thing' there referred to is "the material thing whose existence we take for granted" in a particular act of perceptual acceptance, i.e., is the object of this act. Now "the object of any one act of perceptual consciousness (i.e., of perceptual acceptance) is as such *ostensible* only, and has, as it were, a *prima facie* character. It 'claims'

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<sup>1</sup> P. 25, 142.

to be real and to have certain characteristics, and it may in the end turn out to have them; but equally it may not.”<sup>1</sup> “We can be perceptually conscious of what is not there.”<sup>2</sup> For instance, where the object of my act of perceptual acceptance is a tree, “it may be that the thing is not a tree but something else. It may be not over there but somewhere else (I may have been deceived by a mirror image); it may not have the size and shape I take it to have. Or perhaps I am even having a complete hallucination and there is no material object present to my senses at all.”<sup>3</sup> It is clear, therefore, that (at any rate in this chapter) by the ‘material thing’ Mr. Price means, not what in fact is in the position in which I take it that I see this thing, but this thing which I take it that I see there; i.e., in my terminology, not the real object, but the perceptual appearance. In Mr. Price’s terminology, then, our question as to the relation between the sensum and the perceptual appearance becomes: What precisely is the nature of the sense-datum, and how is it related to the ‘material thing’ which constitutes the object of a particular perceptual act?

Though our perceptual consciousness of the ‘material thing’ is “based on” our sensing of the sense-datum,<sup>4</sup> it is not, Mr. Price points out, inferred from this.<sup>5</sup> We do not even simply “jump straight from” the latter to the former, as we do “from hearing a knock on the door to the thought that our friend Jones has arrived”, or from the words we read to their meaning. “There is not even a passage (from the one to the other). The two states of mind, the acquaintance with the sense-datum and the perceptual consciousness of the tree, just arise together. The sense-datum is presented to us, and the tree dawns on us, all in one moment.”<sup>6</sup> Sensing the sense-datum, we “take for granted” that there

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<sup>1</sup> P. 148.

<sup>2</sup> P. 147.

<sup>3</sup> P. 139.

<sup>4</sup> P. 21.

<sup>5</sup> P. 140.

<sup>6</sup> P. 141.

exists a material thing to which it belongs.<sup>1</sup> We do not, however, at the time distinguish between the two; they can "only be distinguished by subsequent analysis".<sup>2</sup> That, however, does not mean that the sense-datum is in fact identical with the material thing, or that sensing is really indistinguishable from perceptual acceptance. "Not only is perceptual consciousness a radically different form of consciousness from the sensing which it accompanies, being a form of taking-for-granted, whereas that is a form of knowing; what we are conscious of is also radically different."<sup>3</sup> That is to say, "the material thing whose existence we take for granted differs radically from any datum of sense". A sense-datum is transitory, spatially incomplete, private, and has no causal characteristics; by a 'material thing' we mean something which persists for a long period, is spatially complete and public, and has causal characteristics.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Price is here describing the sense-datum and the material thing from different points of view. When he says that the material thing has these characteristics, he does not mean that these characteristics in fact belong to what is before me in the place in which I take the material thing to be, but that in the perception I take it that they belong to what is there. That is to say, in describing the material thing, he is speaking from the point of view of the percipient, regardless of whether the percipient is in fact making a mistake. And rightly so, seeing that by the material thing he means the perceptual appearance. On the other hand, he describes the sense-datum, not as the percipient (or sentient) is aware of it as being, but as it (so Mr. Price believes) in fact is. The percipient himself realises that he is aware of something having the characteristics of a material thing. But he does not realise that he is also aware of something distinct from this, having the characteristics of a sense-datum. Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> P. 142.

<sup>2</sup> P. 141, cf. p. 145.

<sup>3</sup> P. 146.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 145-6.



Price himself admits as much. For he admits that the percipient fails to distinguish between the sense-datum and the material thing. It seems to the percipient that he is aware of one thing only, and, as Mr. Price himself points out, he takes this to have the characteristics of a material thing. He cannot then realise that he is (as Mr. Price claims) also aware of something distinct from this (namely, a sense-datum), having opposite characteristics. If he is also aware of a sense-datum, he does not realise that he is. What Mr. Price should have said, then, is that the percipient is himself conscious only of a material thing, i.e., of something which persists, is spatially complete and public, and has causal characteristics, but in fact (though he does not himself realise it) is also sensing a sense-datum which is transitory, spatially incomplete, private, and has no causal characteristics.

But to say that he in fact senses a sense-datum, but does not realise that he does, is surely self-contradictory, if, as Mr. Price maintains, sensing is a form of awareness, namely acquaintance or intuitive apprehension, in virtue of which something is directly present to my consciousness. If, in being perceptually conscious of the material thing, the percipient also intuitively apprehends a sense-datum, then (1) his apprehension of the sense-datum must be a part of his perceptual consciousness of the material thing—a part which he does not himself distinguish from the rest, but which can be distinguished; (2) the sense-datum cannot be a separate entity radically different from the material thing, but must be simply that part of the material thing which is sensed. Here we have simply been led to state in Mr. Price's terminology our previous conclusion that the sensum is that part of the perceptual appearance which is sensed. The sense-datum which Mr. Price describes as an entity, distinct from the material thing, and having opposite characteristics, but which we intuitively apprehend when we are perceptually conscious of a material thing, on the other hand, is a mere figment. It is, therefore, unnecessary to examine in detail Mr. Price's account of the sense-datum and its relation to

the material thing. But it will perhaps be instructive to enquire why he thinks it necessary to postulate the existence of the sense-datum.

"When I see a tomato", he says, "there is much that I can doubt. I can doubt whether it is a tomato that I am seeing, and not a cleverly painted piece of wax. I can doubt whether there is any material thing there at all. Perhaps what I took for a tomato was really a reflection; perhaps I am even the victim of some hallucination. One thing, however, I cannot doubt: that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of other colour-patches, and having a certain visual depth, and that this whole field of colour is directly present to my consciousness."<sup>1</sup> Now Mr. Price holds that where I cannot doubt a thing or be mistaken in regard to it, I know it; where I can doubt it or be mistaken in regard to it, I do not know it—my awareness of it must be of another kind. Consequently, he concludes, I know that there exists a red patch of a round and somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of other colour-patches, and having a certain visual depth. But that is all I know. I am, however, aware of more; I am aware of a tomato in a certain place. But I do not know that there is a tomato there, for I may be mistaken. My awareness that there is a tomato there is of another kind; I merely take it for granted. Consequently, though we say simply, 'I see a tomato', I am really experiencing two distinct acts of awareness, each having its own distinct object. The acts of awareness must be distinct because they differ in kind, one being a form of knowing, the other not. The objects must be distinct because the one, being an object of an act of knowing, must exist and be precisely such as I am aware of it as being; the other, being the object only of a form of awareness which may be mistaken, need not exist at all, and even if it does may be quite different from what I take it to be. Now the sense-datum is that part of what I am aware of which undoubtedly exists and is such as I am aware of it

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<sup>1</sup>P. 3.

as being. Thus, for example, he decides that a sense-datum cannot be a surface, because a surface must be the surface of some material thing, and there may be no material thing there.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Price's whole conception of the sense-datum, therefore, rests on the distinction he draws (in the paragraph quoted above) between what I can and what I cannot doubt, when (as we say) I see a material thing. We therefore destroy the basis of the whole conception, if we can show that this distinction is unjustified or wrongly drawn. And I believe we can. Mr. Price's statement as to what we can doubt is true so far as it goes. We can doubt whether what I see is a tomato, or whether there is any material thing there at all. But if we use 'is' in the same sense in which it is here used, then I can also doubt whether there is a colour-patch. Certainly I cannot doubt that I am aware of a colour-patch. But neither, using 'aware of' in this sense, can I doubt that I am aware of a tomato. True, there may be no tomato there. But it certainly *seems to me* that there is a tomato there. And I can say no more in the case of the colour-patch. I am no more entitled to say that there not only seems to be, but actually is, a colour-patch, than I am to say that there not only seems to be but is a material object<sup>2</sup> there. If, then, 'exist' means merely 'is an object of awareness' (I propose for the present to speak of anything which exists in this sense as *existing consciously*), then the tomato exists no less than the colour-patch; and anything at all which I imagine or conceive will also exist. But, if 'exist' is taken to mean more than this, if it is used in such a sense that we cannot say that the fantastic creature I am at present imagining exists (I propose for the present to speak of anything which exists in this further sense as *actually existing*), then it is

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<sup>1</sup> Pp. 106, 110.

<sup>2</sup> I say material object and not tomato because, if there were only a painted card there, a colour-patch would exist in a sense in which the tomato would not. (It would actually exist, whereas the tomato would only exist consciously.) But it would not exist in any sense in which the painted card did not exist.

no more certain that the colour-patch exists than that some material object exists.

What is indubitable, then, is that (1) not simply the colour-patch but the tomato exists consciously and seems actually to exist; (2) the act of being aware of the tomato actually exists (or occurs). What is open to doubt is whether either the tomato or the colour-patch does actually exist. It would no doubt be wrong to say that when I see a tomato I am not aware of what is indubitable (*viz.*, so far as we are concerned, that the tomato exists consciously and seems to exist actually). But it is true that I am not attending to this. My attentive awareness, though possible only because the tomato exists consciously and seems to exist actually, is expressed by the proposition 'there is a tomato' (or some proposition about the tomato). I fall back on 'There seems to be a tomato' (*i.e.*, a tomato seems to exist actually), or 'a tomato exists consciously', only if I want to assert no more than is indubitable. Attentive awareness of what is indubitable is not a constituent of the awareness which finds expression in 'There is a tomato', but an alternative which arises when, wishing to assert only what is indubitable, I recognise that this may be false. When, therefore, Mr. Price suggests that 'This table appears brown to me' really means "I am acquainted with something which *actually* is brown (*viz.*, a sense-datum) and I believe that there is a table to which this something is intimately related (*viz.*, belongs to)",<sup>1</sup> he is both misrepresenting what it is that is indubitable, and also treating as concurrent what are really alternative modes of awareness.

As he holds that the sense-datum is that, the existence of which (when I see a tomato) is indubitable, he should have (1) identified the sense-datum with the consciously existing object, and (2) recognised that, though its existence is indubitable, it is not itself normally an object of attentive awareness, but what that to which I normally attend appears

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<sup>1</sup> P. 63.



to be. This means that the sense-datum is really identical with the 'material thing' (or perceptual appearance); the sense-datum which Mr. Price distinguishes from this is a figment.

We must conclude, therefore, that Mr. Price has advanced no reason for modifying our previous conclusion that it is the shape and size of the perceptual appearance which are *sensa* in the same sense in which colour and hardness are.

### III.

How is the perceptual appearance related to the real object? When we merely imagine a thing, though what we imagine exists consciously, we do not regard it as actually existing. When we merely think of a thing, we may regard it as actually existing, but we do not regard it as being before us at the moment. On the other hand, whenever we perceive anything, we hold that there is something, which exists independently of our perception of it, presenting itself to us. If we did not hold this, we would not hold that we were perceiving it, but only that we were merely thinking of or imagining it. We cannot perceive anything, then, without being under the impression that there is a presenting object. The impression that there is a presenting object does not, however, exhaust our perception. We also regard this object as being of a certain nature. We take it that the object is not merely presenting itself, but is presenting itself as a so-and-so, an object of a certain kind or having certain characteristics. To perceive anything, therefore, is to regard a presenting object as being of a certain nature. If the presenting object is of this nature, the perception is true; if it is not of this nature, the perception is false. Consequently, if we speak of anything which is either true or false as a judgment, perception is a form of judgment.<sup>1</sup> Now the real object is the presenting object as it really is. The perceptual appearance is what I regard the presenting object as being, what

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the article "Judgment" in *THE AUSTRALASIAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY*, Vol. XI, No. 2, June, 1933; Hoernlé, "Studies in Contemporary Metaphysics", Ch. 4-5.

this presents itself as or appears to be. If we use the terms subject and predicate in the sense in which Bradley does (or in which I used "logical subject and predicate" in the article "Judgment"), the real object is the subject, the perceptual appearance the predicate, of the perceptual judgment. The perceptual appearance, therefore, is neither an entity of a special kind, whether mental or material, which stands between us and the real object, nor properly speaking part of the real object. It is what the real object presents itself as, or appears to be; it is the predicate of the perceptual judgment, the construction which this judgment identifies with the real object. The presenting object may appear either as it is, or as other than it is. In the latter case the perceptual appearance is illusory, an appearance in the sense in which we oppose appearance and reality. Such an illusory appearance is the predicate of a false perceptual judgment.

Let us consider some typical illusions.

1. We perceive the distant hill (which we know is large and green) as small and blue. Here the real object which is presenting itself is large and green, the perceptual appearance small and blue. That, however, does not mean that there exists an entity of a special kind which is small and blue, but that the presenting object, which is really large and green, appears to be small and blue. I perceive it as being other than it is; in my perception I identify with it a predicate which in fact is discrepant with it.

2. Double vision, e.g., if I hold my pen about a foot in front of my eyes, but focus them on an object a couple of yards away, I 'see two pens'. That, however, does not mean that what I see is two entities of a special kind, but that the presenting object, which in fact is a single pen, appears to be two pens.

Mr. Price contends that we are here using 'appears' in a sense quite different to that in which we used it in the previous example. There it was a case of the hill appearing small and blue; here it is a case, not of the pen appearing double, but

of there appearing to be two pens. In other words, we were previously concerned with "Qualitative Appearing", here with "Existential Appearing".<sup>1</sup>

The difference is due solely to the fact that we describe the two situations in different ways. It disappears as soon as we describe both in the same way. If we say 'the hill appears to be small and blue', we should say that 'the pen appears to be two pens'; if we say that 'there appears to be two pens', then we should say that 'there appears to be a small blue hill'. The real position is that in the first example a presenting object (which in fact is a large green hill) appears to be a small blue object; in the second example a presenting object (which in fact is a single pen) appears to be two pens.

There is, however, another difficulty. Why do we in this case say that we see two pens (i.e., see the perceptual appearance), whereas in the previous case we would say that we see a hill (i.e., see the real object)? As we saw, to perceive is to identify a perceptual appearance with a presenting object, to perceive a presenting object as so-and-so. As, however, if the perception is true, the presenting object and the perceptual appearance are identical, we say simply that we perceive so-and-so. As we speak in the same way where, as in the case of illusions, the two are discrepant, we must choose between saying that we perceive the presenting object and saying that we perceive the perceptual appearance. As what we are normally interested in is the real nature of the object, if an illusion is familiar, we immediately discount it, and think in terms of the real object. Where, on the other hand, an illusion is unfamiliar, even though it does not deceive us, it, rather than the real object, is likely to attract our attention. Consequently, in the former case we say we see the real object, in the latter that we see the perceptual appearance. Now, to see distant hills as small and blue is a very familiar experience, but we seldom notice that we are seeing

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., pp. 62-3.

things double. Consequently, in the former case we say that we see the hill (real object), in the latter case that we see two pens (perceptual appearance).

3. Mirror images. Here, too, I do not perceive an entity of a special kind, but perceive the presenting object as being elsewhere than where it in fact is.

4. Hallucinations, e.g., a pink rat. It might seem that our account of perception will not cover this case because here there is no presenting object. But it is clear that the victim is under the impression that there is a presenting object, otherwise he would not hold that he was *seeing* a pink rat. In this case too the percipient identifies a perceptual appearance with a presenting object. But in this case we cannot find a suitable real object with which to identify the presenting object. Here too, then, the percipient does not perceive an entity of a special kind, but perceives a presenting object, which cannot be identified with a specific real object, as a pink rat.

I anticipate two objections. (1) It may be said that where we recognise that the perceptual appearance is illusory, we *judge* that what is really there is an object having a certain set of qualities, but we perceive an object having a quite different set of qualities, and continue to do so despite the fact that we know that the real object has the other set of qualities. E.g., I judge that the moon is a remote object comparable in shape, size and substance to the earth; what I perceive is a near, flat, cream-coloured disc or crescent. We must, therefore, distinguish between what we judge and what we perceive.

The answer to this objection is that we here have not one, but two judgments, differing in kind, the one perceptual, the other not perceptual. A similar conflict between two judgments occurs where an argument we know must be invalid, nevertheless seems to be valid.

(2) We may be told that, though it is not true that the object is as it appears to me, it is true that it so appears to me. Therefore, I have a true perception of its appearance.



But we can say the same in regard to any judgment. Where in a judgment I identify with the real a construction which in fact is not identical with it, though the judgment is not true, it is true that the construction seems to me to be identical with the real.

#### IV.

We come, then, to a further question. Why does the object sometimes appear as other than it is? Why is the perceptual appearance sometimes the predicate of a false judgment?

The answer seems to be: Because its perceptual appearance is conditioned in part by that which lies outside the object itself. Thus a straight stick partially immersed in water appears bent because the perceptual appearance of the stick is conditioned, not only by the stick, but also by the medium through which the light rays coming from the stick must pass. The pink rat case suffices to show that it may be conditioned by that which does not lie beyond the body of the percipient. Ambiguous diagrams, failure to detect printer's errors, and the like, show that it may be conditioned by psychical factors. The question then arises: Is the perceptual appearance always conditioned by factors which lie beyond the object itself?<sup>1</sup> Do we ever perceive the object as it is in itself? Or is it always other than it appears? We must of course allow that the common-sense distinction between appearance and reality, or between illusory and veridical perception, is valid for the purpose for which it is made. Otherwise the perception of a stump as a man, and the perception of it as a stump, would be on the same level. The question, however, is as to the nature of this distinction. In perceiving the stump as a man, I am perceiving it as it appears under

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<sup>1</sup> When in this connection I speak of the object itself, I mean to exclude characters which belong to the object only in virtue of conditions which we would ordinarily regard as lying beyond the object itself, e.g., the colour which (apparently) belongs to it only because we are looking at it through a coloured glass. I mean to include only those characters which belong to the object without reference to conditions we regard as lying beyond the object itself.

certain conditions. Now the question is: When I perceive it as a stump, do I perceive it as it is simply in itself? Or do I here also perceive it only as it appears under certain, though different, conditions? In other words: Are we entitled to say that an object has any of the qualities we perceive it as having, except under conditions which we would ordinarily regard as lying beyond the object itself? I propose to discuss this question, first in regard to secondary qualities, taking colour as typical of these, and then in regard to primary qualities.

Though we naturally say that the object is coloured, there is no doubt that factors which lie outside what we would ordinarily call the object itself help to determine what colour we perceive it as being. For the colour, which I perceive it as being, differs with different degrees or types of illumination; with the medium through which I see it; according to my state of health; possibly according to what colour I expect to see; according as I am not or am, and to what extent, colour-blind. Quite a variety of factors outside the object itself, then, help to determine what colour I perceive it as being. Do they likewise determine what colour it is? (1) I cannot say that the object itself (i.e., without reference to these outside factors) is all these different colours, unless I regard the object as a collection, each item of which is a different colour and manifests itself under different conditions. If we do this we must abandon the conception of the real object as a persisting unity or substance or thing, that is, abandon the basic category of all our thinking and all our language, and devise new ways of thinking and a new language, between which and our present language there can be no translation. It seems to me that we should take, or attempt to take, this step only as a last resort; so long as there remains a less drastic alternative, I shall maintain that the object itself is not all the colours we perceive it as being. (2) I have no ground for saying that the object is in itself one of these colours, but appears to be the other colours only owing to the intervention of factors outside the object

itself. This could perhaps be maintained with some show of plausibility, if we had any reason for thinking that one colour occupied a prerogative position. But we have not. No doubt we normally agree as to what colour an object is. But that is only because we are agreed as to the conditions under which it is to be observed. This is the colour which the object appears to be under conditions—conditions which lie outside what we would ordinarily call the object itself—no less than the other colours are. The only difference is that these conditions either occur more frequently, or are those in which we are normally interested. This difference is sufficient to justify our ordinary assertion that the object is such and such a colour, for this may be interpreted to mean that it appears as coloured thus under these conditions. But it constitutes no reason for thinking that the object does not merely appear as coloured thus under these conditions, but is this colour in itself, without reference to these conditions. Though, then, we cannot prove that the object is not coloured in itself, the facts I mentioned show that, if it is coloured in itself, the colour which it is in itself is never the sole condition determining what colour we perceive it as being. The apparent or perceived colour is always determined in part by conditions beyond the object itself. If it is coloured in itself, we can never perceive what that colour is. We can, then, I think, take it as practically certain that simply in itself, that is, without reference to conditions which we would ordinarily suppose to lie beyond the object itself, the object is not coloured.

Does it in itself possess primary qualities? It is clear that our perception of the primary qualities is not conditioned by precisely the same factors as condition our perception of secondary qualities such as colour. These factors may vary, causing us to perceive the object as differing in colour, without any variation in our perception of its shape and size. Nevertheless, it does appear to vary in shape and size as a result of variations in other factors outside the object itself. Thus, except within certain limits, from a greater distance

we perceive it as smaller, while from a different angle we perceive it as a different shape. So far, then, the primary qualities are on a level with the secondary.

Can we here, however, say that the variation is only apparent; that the shape and size of the object really remain the same, and appear to vary only because we change our point of view? We certainly cannot claim that our perception of its real shape and size is not conditioned by factors which lie outside the object itself. To mention only one point, it is obvious that in every case our perception must be conditioned by our sense-organs. Can we, however, say that, though our perception of it is always conditioned by factors which lie outside the object itself, nevertheless, under certain conditions, we perceive the object as the shape and size which it is in itself? If we are to make this claim, we must at least have some ground for selecting one perception rather than others as revealing the shape and size which it is in itself. You may say that we have; that, despite the fact that it often appears different, we know what shape and size the object really is. For instance, though it can appear elliptical and no bigger than a full stop, a penny is really round and about an inch and a quarter in diameter. The suggestion, then, is that in this case the contact shape and size represent a prerogative case. But in what sense is it prerogative? It differs from what we call the colour of the object in that it is determined, not by direct reference to perception, but by its relation to other objects. E.g., we determine its size by relating it to the scale on a foot rule. From our point of view, however, this difference seems to be superficial. For, on the one hand, perception is indirectly involved, in that it is only through perception that we can relate it to other objects; on the other hand, we can in the same way determine the secondary quality of one object by relating it to another, e.g., the colour of an object by comparing it with a colour-card. The two cases appeared different, it would seem, only because our interest is different in the two cases. It is the relative size and shape of the object that



we are interested in; but we are normally interested in their absolute colours. Contact size and shape represent a prerogative case only in the sense that it is the case in which we are normally interested, because it is the case which is practically important. What is practically important is to be able to fit objects together.

If this contention is correct, primary qualities are really on the same footing as secondary. A further reason for thinking that this is so, is that we never visually perceive either without the other, and perceive both as qualifying the object in precisely the same way. If, then, we said that the object is in itself a certain shape and size, we would also have to say that it is in itself a certain colour. And that, we have seen, is almost certainly not true.

We have found, then, that, in the case of all the qualities we perceive an object as having, our perception of them is conditioned by factors which lie outside what we would ordinarily call the object itself. This does not, of course, necessarily imply that the qualities themselves are so conditioned. But (1) we saw, in the case of colour, that there is no empirical evidence that the qualities themselves are not similarly conditioned, but instead good ground for thinking that they are; and that there is no reason for maintaining that the same is not true in regard to primary qualities. (2) We have no *a priori* evidence, or evidence based on more general considerations, to justify us in maintaining that the qualities themselves are not similarly conditioned. We certainly cannot argue generally that what, under given conditions, appears in a certain way, exists apart from these conditions just as it appears under them. Nor can we argue that the very conception of perception implies that the object in itself, that is, without reference to conditions which we ordinarily take to lie beyond the object itself, is such as we perceive it as being. It is true that we would not perceive an object if the being of the object consisted simply in being perceived. But that does not prove that the being of the

perceived object lies solely in what we ordinarily take to be the object. Nor does it imply that this must in itself, or taken in isolation from the world of which it forms a part, have the qualities which we perceive it as having. It only implies that, under the conditions under which it is perceived, it does manifest itself as perceived. It may be that the act of perceiving is itself one of the conditions of its manifestation. This fact, if it is such, makes it impossible for us to perceive it as it would be if it existed in isolation. But it does not preclude us from perceiving it as it exists within the world to which the act of perception also belongs. It does, however, mean that by the object we must understand, not what it would be if it existed in isolation, but what it is in the world in which it does exist. We can perceive this object as it is, even though its being is (in part) conditioned by our perception, because our perception is part of the world in which it exists.

Now what we want to know is, not what the object would be if it existed in isolation, but what it is as existing in the world in which it does exist; not what it is 'in itself', in the sense in which we have so far understood that phrase, i.e., without reference to anything which we would ordinarily regard as lying beyond the object itself, but what it manifests itself as, under the conditions under which it does exist. Now, as thus existing, it does have both primary and secondary qualities; it has, under any set of conditions, all the qualities which, under those conditions, we perceive it as having, for it is that which thus realises and manifests itself.

We may be told that, on this view, we cannot make the distinction which we ordinarily do make between appearance and reality, or between illusory and veridical perception. For an illusory appearance is just as good a manifestation of the object under certain conditions as is a veridical appearance. The only difference is that the conditions are different.

The objector's contention is true, but does not constitute an objection. The fact that the two cases are different enables

us to draw the ordinary distinction between appearance and reality. The perceptual appearance is regarded as an appearance, in the sense in which appearance is opposed to reality, if it is the manifestation of the object under what we regard as abnormal conditions; it is regarded as real if it is the manifestation of the object under what we regard as normal conditions. What conditions we regard as normal are determined by our interest rather than by the frequency with which they occur. What common sense regards as the real object, or the object itself, then, is the object as realised under what we regard as normal conditions; and that usually means the conditions in which we are interested. To arrive at the (common-sense) real object, it is necessary to abstract, not from all conditions, but only from those which we regard as abnormal. But, as a matter of fact, its manifestations under abnormal conditions are equally manifestations of the object. In reality, therefore, the object is that which realises itself in various ways under various conditions. This object has, under these various conditions, the qualities we perceive it as having. The sensa are these qualities.

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## SAMUEL ALEXANDER: AN APPRECIATION.

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By A. BOYCE GIBSON.

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WITH the death of Samuel Alexander on September 13 the British peoples have been deprived of their foremost representative among modern philosophers. No one who has been privileged to attend for some years the Joint Meeting of the Mind Association and the Aristotelian Society—the central yearly event of philosophical life in Great Britain—can have had any doubt about his personal pre-eminence among his peers. His very appearance was outstanding: his magnificent head, his massive forehead, his patrician Roman-Jewish profile, his patriarchal beard, all contribute to the total air of majesty and distinction. Moreover, he spoke as one having authority, with mature judgment and simple wisdom, with unaffected serenity and kindly humour. Both by the grace of nature and by the effort of understanding, he was a leader. Yet there never was a man less anxious to assert himself, more free from doctrinal contentiousness, more humble in the face of the facts or of his fellows, more unobtrusive in his helpfulness, more single-minded and free from self-consciousness in his search for truth. In short, he was a living example of the “natural piety” which he preached as an antidote to the bragging anthropolatry of humanistic Idealism.

Alexander was by origin an Australian, having been born in Sydney in 1859, and educated at Wesley College, Melbourne. He stands with Professor Gilbert Murray and the late Sir Grafton Elliot Smith as an example of the intellectual prowess of his generation of Australians, nurtured in the spaciousness of a new colony, and matured by the traditions of an older society. He was an undergraduate of Balliol College, Oxford, and for some years a Fellow of Lincoln College. His lasting fame, however, is associated neither with Australia nor with Oxford, but with Manchester, where he settled as Professor of Philosophy in 1893, and where he lived, whether in harness or in retirement, ever after. Of that most humane and progressive of modern British cities he was almost an institution. As he grew older the benevolent and distinguished figure in his comfortable academic old clothes, perched on the inseparable bicycle on which he is said to have “scoured Manchester on the track of Deity”, became as familiar and as affectionately legendary as that of Kant taking his punctual walk through the streets of Königsberg. To the University, to the Jewish



community (he was always proud of being a Jew) and to the civic life of Manchester he gave the best and maturest part of his life; and it is as "Alexander of Manchester" that history will remember him.

It is perhaps too early to estimate the importance of Alexander's work in the development of modern philosophy. As is well known, he was one of the British pioneers of the "New Realism", which was congenial both to the trend of his studies and to the cast of his mind. From the beginning, and long before he had detached himself from the prevalent Hegelianism of the eighteen-nineties, he had shown a marked bent for empirical investigation (he used to astonish Lincoln College with his psychological experiments), and he had a deep respect for the cautious fact-controlled agnosticism of natural science. Moreover, he was naturally humble, and the evident relish with which he sent man spinning from his self-accredited eminence to his due and proper place in "the great democracy of things" indicates an underlying conviction, amounting almost to a bias, in favour of any theory which would lead men to contemplate the natural articulation of the facts rather than their own image. In the "New Realism" he found himself, and he joined with Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore in assailing the basis of Idealist epistemology. But from the beginning his emphasis was different. His revolution was at once more conciliatory and more far-reaching. It was more conciliatory, because he retained what they discarded, a belief in the possibility of constructive metaphysics. It was more far-reaching because his interest in epistemology was only incidental to metaphysical reform: he was interested in the place of mind in the knowledge relation because he was interested in the place of mind in the universe.

It is this metaphysical interest, issuing as it did not from a frothy and evanescent aspiration, but from a cautious and a mellow wisdom, which establishes his position among the great inquirers. There may be doubts concerning the consistency of his metaphysical construction, though carping critics could say the same of Aristotle, Spinoza, or Hegel. But he did at least try to relate the new epistemology to a new vision of the world: and he did it with incomparable honesty, sparing neither himself nor others. Others were concentrating on a narrow front: they were reaching positive conclusions on specific issues, and recording their detailed investigations in pithy controversial contributions to "Mind". Their work was indispensable, but for lack of conspectus it was unconstructive. Alexander certainly cannot be accused of neglecting detailed investigations: there are sheaves of them to his credit, in psychology, in epistemology, in ethics, and in æsthetics. But in "Space, Time and Deity" he gathered them together, correlated and systematized his insights, and presented them as aspects of a new and inclusive interpretation of things.

Alexander was fond of comparing himself with Spinoza, with whom he felt himself to be linked not only by race, but also by interests and temperament. Indeed, he went the length of saying that his philosophy is what Spinoza's would have been if he had lived in a period which had learnt to pay respect to time. Evolution, relativity, and the growth of a historical consciousness lay between them: but they approached problems in the same way and, *mutatis mutandis*, reached the same conclusions. Liberally interpreted, this self-revelation is most enlightening. Like Spinoza, Alexander cannot separate mind from matter: like Spinoza, he is absolutely faithful to the findings of science, and yet has the vision to see in them material for religion: like Spinoza, he declares war on anthropomorphic conceptions of the world, reducing knowledge to compresence as his great forerunner reduced it to a parallel attribute: like Spinoza, he insisted on the relativity of value to instinct: like Spinoza again, he combines an uncompromising naturalism with a sense of the affinity of man with his world which is commonly associated with mystical experience. There remains, however, the cleavage between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries: for Spinoza the world has a sort of geometrical eternity, for Alexander time is one of its ultimate constituents.

This is hardly the place for a detailed exposition of Alexander's philosophy, as expounded in his *magnum opus*, *Space, Time and Deity*. It is enough to say that for him the ultimate stuff of things is Space-Time: that the categories or forms of order are inherent in Space-Time, and not, as Kant supposed, supplied by an interpreting mind; that the stuff of Space-Time carries the germs of an evolutionary development within it, and spontaneously generates "emergent qualities": that each emergent is through and through spatio-temporal, but something else as well: that mind is one of such emergents: that the act of mind and the object are distinct existences united by the relation of compresence: and that Deity is the "next higher empirical quality than mind", perhaps already in process of emergence, and apprehended only through a peculiar religious form of awareness. It is not the outline so much that impresses, as the spirit which fills it. As with Spinoza, there is a far-reaching wisdom in the work which outstrips the positive doctrine, and which fascinates and stimulates even those who, like the present writer, reject some of its primary postulates.

The immediate influence of Alexander on the growth of philosophy has probably been less than was deserved. He had the misfortune to embark on metaphysical construction at a time when a revolt against metaphysics was just beginning, and was being led by those who shared his epistemological views. Those who sympathized with his conception of philosophy dissented from his premisses, and those who

accepted his premisses did not share his conception of philosophy. This was unfortunate, for if the Realist movement cannot produce a metaphysic, it is safe to say that it will stand self-condemned. Towards such a metaphysic Alexander has shown the way; and it is to be hoped that when the present craze for logistics has passed, and the philosophers whom it has chastened return with a new sobriety but an old determination to their proper task of metaphysical construction, they will explore again the territory he has visited, and test for themselves the accuracy of his charts. Whatever their destination, they cannot but profit from some detailed sections, and they cannot but be inspired by contact with the mind of the master-cartographer who drew them.

Alexander, however, set no store by influence or reputation. It was the work that he thought of, not himself. The *Manchester Guardian*, in an appreciation in its issue of 14th September, which epitomizes both the man and his philosophy, said: "One day a friend of his, looking at his bust by Epstein in the hall of the new Arts building at Manchester University, remarked to him, 'What a marvellous likeness!' Alexander replied, 'Fifty years hence someone will come and say, by Jove, an Epstein!'"

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## REVIEWS.

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THE LASTING ELEMENTS OF INDIVIDUALISM. By William Ernest Hocking; 1937, Yale University Press.

In this book Professor Hocking, of Harvard, is concerned to show that there is something in individualism to which the classical political theory has so far failed to do justice. The idealistic criticisms of the individualistic theories, valid so far as they go, and substantiated as they have been by political developments, do not, it would appear, allow for the kernel of truth in these theories. This element of essential truth—missed hitherto by the actual exponents of individualism, it must be admitted—is now brought home to us both positively and negatively by the case of the new contra-democratic politics in Europe. Positively in that the reaction from liberalism represents genuine inadequacies in the individualistic philosophising from which liberalism sprang. Negatively because that reaction points through the shock of its excesses to a better formulation of individualism which shall avoid the weaknesses of traditional liberalism. Professor Hocking is thus committed equally to an inquest into what has happened to liberalism and to a critical analysis of the doings of the new *régimes*. Himself a philosopher of the classical school, the author appears satisfied that his reconstruction is sufficiently different from idealistic political theory as hitherto formulated, or emphasised, to continue to be called individualism.

A further element in Professor Hocking's argumentation enters in this way. Inasmuch as their rejection of liberalism constitutes a point of resemblance between the proletarian and the fascist States of the day, the importance of the whole issue of liberalism must be denied by those who wish to appear consistent in asserting that the opposition between fascism and communism is the only important relation between fascism and communism. Now this position requires for its justification the adoption of what is most familiarly known as the economic interpretation of history. Accordingly Professor Hocking deals faithfully with Marxianism right through his argument. No one can complain that he ignores it, or fails to give it a fair hearing at every point where it impinges upon his position.

In expounding the essence of individualism and the derivation therefrom of historical liberalism, Professor Hocking's point of departure is the *prima facie* logical interdependence of state and individual. If, notwithstanding the force of this consideration, individualism yet assigns an ultimate priority to the individual, it



must be through a certain act of faith in the possibilities of the individual that goes beyond appearances. Such a faith is liberalism; the belief that individuals, in order to develop as such, must be trusted with more than they can, at the moment, do well. It is thus a form of that system of discipline known as "putting them on their honour".

Now the author's criticism of historical liberalism is, in a nutshell, just that it has been an "honour system" interpreted as if that implied total unconcern, on the part of the trusting, whether or not the trusted fulfils his trust. Its failures and consequent discredit in the contemporary world are analysed by Professor Hocking under the heads of (1) failure to achieve social unity, (2) the cultivation of individual rights without regard to individual duties, (3) an unrealistic emotional basis—amiability towards human goodness but towards human evil a complete neglect of "the honourable severities of living".

In the central chapter (whose contents correspond most closely to the original paper on the Future of Liberalism from which the book took its growth) the author traces in the misfortunes of modern liberalism the working out of its own dialectic in the contemporary movements, fascistic and communistic, towards that social unity which liberalism has missed. That Professor Hocking's conception of dialectic is much closer to the Socratic than to either Hegel's or Marx's, both of which he criticises, may be seen from his description of it as "a form of experience in which each imperfect thought furnishes a clue to its successor". Dialectic eventuates in ideas for improved practice, while only ideas that arise dialectically are of any practical efficacy. Dialectical thinking can be pursued by the individual thinker as a method of criticism. Professor Hocking provides an example of it in his devastating analysis of Mill's famous argument for the Liberty of Thought and Discussion (still regarded in some "academic" quarters, *e.g.*, the N.Z. University Teachers' Association, as the last word on the subject) and again in a sustained contra-position of Mill and Marx as thesis and antithesis in a dialectical movement which leads to a synthesis offering the possibility of a policy more satisfactory than fascism and communism.

Mill's insistence on "no penalty for opinion" is just a typical example of those "costless rights" which are the fine flower of traditional liberalism. According to Mill the fruit of the recognition of this right will—believe it or not—be the promotion in the members of the community of moral courage! But the crowning inconsistency of the liberal position is seen in the fact that Mill puts the whole affair on a utilitarian basis. Individual "rights" and the possibility of their infringement have no logical place in the scheme; rights are hardly mentioned by Mill, but only "social utility". But who is to

decide in a given case what makes for social utility? Mussolini? Mill's liberalism has an utterly illiberal basis. What else, however, can you have when the counterpart of individual liberty or "rights" is not individual duty, but, as in the developed liberalism of the utilitarians (if not in John Locke), the pursuit of a sum of personal satisfactions, *bourgeois* success? Conversely, if we put the matter fairly and squarely on a basis of "social utility" and neglect individual "rights", just think of the staggering cost to society involved in the implication of Mill's proposal, which means nothing less than that no idea, however true, must ever be allowed to "prevail!"

In his exceedingly sympathetic study of Marx, Professor Hocking brings out Marx's antithetical position to Mill on all the important issues of contemporary politics. Marx, it seems, clearly formulated the modern predicament—a capitalism that has solved the problem of production but left us with the whole unsolved problem of distribution on our hands—whereas Mill thought the question of the mere amount of property falling to the share of the individual a matter of minor importance. In individualism, with its trust in "reason", Marx sees only a class-trait, bound in the nature of the case to work out its own principle to the limit, thus preparing its own death. Marx is a pessimist where Mill is an optimist. Mill supports an individualistic scheme of society in the interests of an automatically consequent collective good, whereas Marx, his problem being that of distribution, supports a collectivistic scheme of society for the sake of individual good. Both, if given free and exclusive rein, involve the ruin of the individual personality. On the emotional side of the question Marx, a "deeper man" than Mill, insists on the hard pugnacities of life in a way that is refreshing after the sentimental wash of unredeemed benevolence that is characteristic of liberal writers. Nevertheless, brine as a sole diet is, to quote Professor Hocking, meagre and pretends to a greater realism than it has.

Now if and when dialectic, as the "slow consensus of freely thinking and groping human minds as they perceive the inadequacy of the thoughts that have been guiding them", suggests a new idea beyond all this, that idea will not cancel the insight of Mill, with his dominant aspiration after "social wholeness" or of Marx with his "subconscious individualism". It must present a more complete individual, with an essential moral quality not derived from mere social relations or economic status. Now we reach the kernel of Professor Hocking's contention.

The complete individual has a "joining function" expressed in the fact that he can and does think "we" and not merely "I". This simple consideration renders unnecessary the idea of a prior "social organism" in which the individual exists as a cell in a body. Rather

there is an organism to be built by individuals whose "joining function" implies a basic need for something beyond themselves. Professor Hocking has firmly grasped the fact that the principle of community is just the reference to a common object or objective.

From this derives incidentally the sound element in the fascist and communist States of today—how badly applied by them the author shows at length—namely, that they give their members something to do together. They literally make a commotion, and this "commotive principle" is with Professor Hocking a political principle of permanent validity, strictly correlative with the demand that every man be a whole man, and a principle meet for assimilation by the democratic State. The lesson to be learnt from a contemplation of the corrupt, foolish, runaway Governments of today is not to fall back on the traditional liberal "principle of least Government", but to put more life into the control exercised by a Government better equipped.

Professor Hocking's practical philosophy of politics culminates accordingly in the conception of the Co-agent State, whose function it is to discover a course of action which will enhance rather than diminish individual initiative. The principles laid down by the author as bearing on the economic sphere may be of especial interest. The touch of Government is needed:

1. Where the rules of competition tend to give the advantage to the meanest competitor.
2. Where the profit-motive fails to make industry go.

The operation of Government under this latter head takes the form of:

3. Maintaining constant control of the total relation between consumption and production. (We cannot—in *modo* Marx—take production as read and set about a scheme of just distribution as simply an additional problem by itself, otherwise unemployment will remain, *teste* Russia. For the "problem of consumption" is how to let men in at the production.)

It is impossible to convey in a brief review the width of Professor Hocking's canvass, in a book of 187 pages, of the contemporary social and political situation, national and international, the incisiveness of his analyses and the felicity of his comments. Has Professor Hocking's intellectual immersion in realistic politics enabled him to carry the political theory of idealism a stage further?

On the expository side there can be no doubt. Professor Hocking can talk to the realists in the only language they understand, their own. The average student of "political science" in the "realistic" university of today finds the standard writers of the classical school—Hegel, Green, Bosanquet—dismissed in short order by his official ushers into that cat-witted orthodoxy of universal economic determina-

tion which so uniformly prevails in that institution. But in Professor Hocking's book he will find a statement of the position too nearly in touch with the special issues, and expressed in the language, of the hour to be disposed of by summary jibes.

On the issue of fundamental theory my doubts are these. Professor Hocking's strong point is that the classical political theory has so far had to offer us no alternative to the historical individualism save only the conception of "the social organism". But for this, he holds, the sufficient and necessary substitute is to be found in the revision of individualism on the lines he suggests. Here his argument involves, I think, a certain amphiboly.

I would deny that the conception of the individual as an organ in an organism is the proper signification of "the organic theory of the State". In the interpretation of the classical political theory too much weight has been attached to the Pythagorean scheme of classes outlined by Socrates in the Republic and too little attention paid to the Crito, with the result that specialisation of function has been regarded as the very principle of community, according to the theory. But obviously while specialisation may be found within a community, equally it may be found without it. It does not define community, which is correlatively indefinable with mind itself. One has to notice, of course, such things as Hegel's conception of specific national missions in history. But this is all subordinate to the central point in the classical theory, for which the important word is not the noun "organism" but the adjective "organic". Thus the pertinent question about the state is, organic to what? I submit that what Hegel, as much as any other member of the school, intends above all to say is that the State is the organ of individuality, it is "organic to" the moral life, it is the "instrument" by which the competitive order of mere "society", the "economic sphere", is controlled to the end that manhood be not lost therein. In short, the State controls the citizen in order to liberate the man. As such it is the absolute assertion, or reassertion, of community. When Hegel talks about the State's being an end in itself, or having absolute rights against the interests of the particular man or men, he means the economic man, who is not an individual at all, but can only begin to attain to individuality through State-control of society.

Now I find it noteworthy in Professor Hocking's discussion that although it starts from that standpoint from which it is as true that the State is prior to the individual as that the individual is prior to the State, all the author's working examples of the former, the priority of the State to the individual, are taken from those forms of life in community in which the place of the individual approximates most closely to the "organ in an organism" pattern—kinship, feudal



allegiance and the like. But if the only means of showing the need for some form of individualism as a supplement to traditional idealism is to suggest that the idealistic theory of the State has ever been restricted to, or even dominated by, tribal or feudal notions, it may not appear that we have made much progress. The priority of the State in "idealistic" theory, such as it is, is a logical priority, which is most explicitly presented in the consideration that in order to become a man, as distinct from any mere clansman, *Junker*, vassal or tradesman the human specimen must continue to belong to a State.

So again Professor Hocking insists, presumably as against certain versions of the doctrine of the general will, corporate personality and the like (mostly the versions of the doctrine's critics), that there is no conscience but individual conscience. But, after all, what have the theorists of the general will ever intended beyond that whose absence Professor Hocking makes his principal count against the theory of the fascist State, namely, the realisation that the technicalities of law and administration, however they may exceed the mental grasp of the average citizen, are the continuation—extrapolation is the author's term—of his individual will? It should not be forgotten that according to the classical doctrine it is possible that the general will may not be the will of the Government, but it is impossible that it is not the will of the individual; whereas Professor Hocking seems rather to suggest that it must be the will of the Government, but may or may not be the will of the individual.

I am not quite clear how far Professor Hocking is prepared to go towards identifying the State with the legal sovereign. It is true, of course, that the existence of legal sovereignty is a negative mark or necessary condition of the State, and it is likewise true that, as the author brilliantly shows, it is to the rise of the State that we owe the emergence of the individual from specific social entanglements. Moreover, the conscience of the individual, thus awakened, is now open to be turned against its liberator, the legal sovereign itself. But in realising all this we mustn't "take the 'con' out of conscience". The essence of the general will theory is the recognition of public opinion as the ultimate political sovereign to which the legal sovereign, Government itself, defers. Now public opinion is an integral of the influence of all institutions, and has no exclusive association with problems of police-Government. (Indeed, it may be suggested that the pre-war, pre-Bolshevik agitation of pluralism *versus* monism, so far indeed as it was *bona fide* and not mere highbrow camouflage for the advent of Marxian totalitarianism, would never have arisen as an issue in political theory if people had kept in mind the distinction between legal and political sovereignty.) The two points to be noted here, then, are: (1) That individual conscience is bound up with,

though never exhausted by, the process of public opinion, and cannot be disassociated from public opinion in the way in which it may be from Government. Public opinion does not make that abstraction from ethical considerations which is sometimes claimed for Statecraft. (2) The moral issue of conscience *versus* constituted authority is not restricted to the field of police-Government, but arises within every type of communal institution. Historically the State may have brought this issue into relief and generalised it; it has neither created, abolished, nor monopolised it.

It would seem, then, to be in some neglect of this distinction between legal and political sovereignty that Professor Hocking can represent fascism (at least as philosophised by Professor Gentile) as a consistent development of the doctrine of the general will, despite the fact that fascism denies all political capacity to the average individual beyond what is pumped into him by the Government. But this has the consequence that when Professor Hocking proceeds to the criticism of the fascistic politics the position he develops against it is only with the utmost difficulty to be distinguished from the classical teaching. Put in terms of the latter, his objection to fascism is just that it attempts to derive all communal institutions from legal sovereignty and rejects their emanation from public opinion, a derivation which Gentile actually tries to stigmatise as aristocratic because traditionalistic, the fascist State being the only true democracy! The masses don't think anyway, so it is more democratic that they should receive their civilisation, lock, stock and barrel from an absolute police-state than that they should get it through traditional institutions which embody all sorts of privilege and monopoly. But under cover of this special pleading, what fascism has done is simply to harden the fact that the general will (in him) is objective for the individual into the doctrine that the general will is something put into him from outside, to which nothing in him answers. But in pointing this out in his own way, Professor Hocking is substantially reasserting the idealistic position of Hegel, Green and Bosanquet; the fascistic argument can be recognised as only an extreme perversion of the theory of the general will.

(Incidentally a distinctly humorous commentary upon the *bona fides* of the not-too-distant attempts to support the claims of "functional groups" in the economic sphere—guilds or what not—on the basis of a pluralistic political theory, is afforded by the fact that the sole instance of their practical realisation has been found in the highly monistic "corporative State".)

Then again, the author, it seems to me, is rather kind to Marxianism in representing it as an attempted solution of a "problem

of distribution" addressed to "us" in common. No doubt every sectional movement or one-sided theory in history can be represented as the outcome or "expression" of some deep-seated problem or need, for the time being, of humanity as a whole. But we must not overlook the fact that to handle the teaching of Karl Marx in this way involves us in the most direct possible contradiction with the actual content of Marxianism, of whose essence it is to deny the reality of a common interest. The immoralistic scepticism of principles, the entanglement of "historical materialism" (moving as it does most undialectically in the categories of essence) in the dilemmas of appearance and reality, the ambiguity in the concept of the economic (leading to questions of whether all history is "really" the history of class-struggles or "really" the history of technical inventions), the Heraclitean *recondita armonia* of the class-war theory (fully as "optimistic" as Mill's socially beneficent self-seeking)—these may and do give rise to conflicting policies in "the movement", but they are all alike incompatible with the attitude of "advocating communism" or "believing in the desirability of communism". Any claim to rights within the present order, based on that implication of regard for a common good which is involved in the use of such words as "advocating" or "believing in the desirability of" must, in the mouths of Marxians, be so much unscrupulous hypocrisy and a cloak for violence. After all, the sophist is the same in all ages, whether he be Protagoras-Thrasymachus or Marx-Freud.

All this is of some importance in its bearing on Professor Hocking's *excursus*—from his critique of Mill—upon the subject of freedom of expression, and more especially the "academic" brand thereof. Marxian Communism, on its own showing, is not a plan, "solution", or ideal, to be "argued for", "advocated", or "believed in", save by middle-class knights-errant (who undoubtedly have their temporary uses to "the movement"), so that discussions like Professor Hocking's of the rights and duties of such "believers"—unless indeed we simply assume at the outset that they are going to be unconvinced in the end—have the air of a work of supererogation. Doubtless those of us who hold that the State is something are bound in logic to rank professing communists as believers, and thus as capable of rights in the community—to or in which these same theorists recognise no duties of their own part. Actually, of course, believers of sorts most "communists" are, and thus potential *bourgeois*. But the administrative treatment of communism as a practical creed is bound to be determined by the degree of respect for belief in general that is to be anticipated from Marxianism.

Professor Hocking's solution of the question of "academic freedom" turns in the first place upon a distinction between the functions, on

the one hand of the primary and secondary schools, which are "the places for the conveying of the prevailing tradition together with the reasons which have supported it" (and therefore for this reason—as well as others concerning personal *bona fides*—not the places for "the advocacy of communism"), and on the other of the universities, whose case is governed by the principle that "college age is the age for philosophical enquiry, and for the recognition of the problematic and unfinished aspects of our civilization". Thus "the man who can present steadily, fairly and without fear all the facts and experiments of the contemporary world (including the facts of propaganda and inflamed speech) within the frame of a reflective and earnest judgment is a man of the greatest value for any university", and the Government which denies him free speech is damned.

In how many of the thickly strewn "universities" of today is there an approximation to these standards? How many of the "cases" in which academic freedom has been proclaimed to be at stake can plausibly be described as the denial of freedom in teaching to a man of the type portrayed by Professor Hocking? Do not the familiar cases tend also to raise legitimate questions of the following order? Is the modernistic university capable of distinguishing between the genuine critic and the pathological "case" the one fault of whose version of human nature is that of mistaking autobiography for general psychology? Or how often do not we find the man who is an "expert" in some nicety—specialisation in modern educational parlance tending to mean such ignorance of everything else that the specialist's opinion on anything else is worth no more than that of the next man you meet—claiming in the name of equality that his academic office must be no bar, make no difference, to the expression, in the exercise of his "rights as a citizen", of all his opinions nor to any of his activities? But as to these rights, is it not further claimed that of course they would be rendered null and void were any restriction contemplated upon his propagating any of these opinions in the course of his professional work? He may admit in words a special responsibility as attaching to his academic position, but of his discharge of that responsibility no one but himself, as the occupant of an academic post (or perhaps his "peers"), can be the judge.

Now why should people at large be expected to defer to any such privileged humbug, merely on the off-chance that here and there a man of the stamp desiderated by Professor Hocking may be found? What hope is there of the production of his like by the methods of modern "realistic" education? If people can see for themselves that some learned academicians on "public questions" show anything but wisdom, how are you going to stop them from asking if it is worth while having academies at all? Once you introduce the consideration



of possible obstruction to the learning process by propaganda in schools, you invite comparison with possibilities at "college age" of the fixation of attitudes through the prestige of academic dignitaries with, philosophically, the minds of adolescents. I suggest that Professor Hocking's criterion of the value of academic freedom is today fully as serious a challenge to university authorities as it is to the representatives of the public. One gets the impression all too frequently that the function of the contemporary "realistic" university is merely to take over its problems, all uncriticised, from the world outside—from Government, from business, from the street corner—and supply to order the technique of the required solutions, a process euphemistically entitled "the service of the community". No attempt is made to analyse the genuineness of the "problems" submitted to it. Small wonder that its *alumni* should acquire the general conviction that mere discontent is criticism, and thus earn in select quarters a cheap reputation as intellectual pioneers and thinkers. The modern university cannot have it both ways. If it chooses to be an anti-academic repository of "scientific method in the social studies", it must not complain of being deprived of an academic freedom that it cannot possibly need.

I submit, then, that in view of what the university of today tends to be or to become, it does not reveal that particular difference in respect of aim and scope from the primary and secondary schools—some differences it doubtless does present—which for Professor Hocking justifies a differentiation in what the community ought to tolerate in the way of the canvassing of public issues in the respective types of institution.

The general effect of the book, of course, is much more that of a re-statement of classical political theory than of the presentation of an alternative standpoint. The author has certainly cleared away a deal of useless lumber by putting the simple fact implied by the use of the word "we" in the place of the various biological analogies through which the attempt has been made to express the nature of community and its place in human experience. Perchance the demonstration of the futility of a sociology without "we" may help to bring home the like futility of a psychology without "I". Professor Hocking is likewise to be congratulated on disposing effectively of that legalistic bugbear, the doctrine that the State has no concern with the motives of the individual, or with "matters of conscience". One of the most striking features of the book is the way in which it brings out that "the individual" of traditional liberalism at his most successful is left at a dead end—the attainment of that sum of personal satisfactions which is the liberal substitute for the duties which should be the correlate of his rights being incapable of

returning him to a function in the community commensurate with the energies that individualism has liberated in him in the activities of modern business. The result is frustration. (And frustration, we would add, not merely in the personal lives of the successful business men themselves—just think of the kind of academic gad-about on whom are expended the benefactions of the old American millionaires in the name of “social research”.) As Professor Hocking aptly suggests, the failure of modern capitalism, in solving the problem of production, to solve that of distribution as celebrated by Marx, must be extended from the production and distribution of things to the production and distribution of men. Business has made men, but it has failed to distribute them into the community.

Professor Hocking’s brilliant book is a welcome sign of the vitality of the classical tradition not only in political theory but in general philosophy.

W. ANDERSON.

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PSYCHOLOGY DOWN THE AGES: By C. Spearman, Ph.D., LL.D. Macmillan. London, 1937. Two volumes. Pp. 454 and 355. Price 30s.

Spearman’s “Psychology Down the Ages” is not an orthodox history of psychology. It abandons both chronology and any attempt at the impartial depiction of competing schools, setting out rather to estimate, by reference to its past history, the actual progress which psychology has made. “We hope”, he says, “to indicate the chief assets, also liabilities which have been accumulated, and so to draw up a fair and square balance-sheet” (Vol. I, p. 7). Of course, many of us will disagree with Spearman’s financial policy, and doubt whether quite so many of the assets are mortgaged to the London school. Nevertheless, we cannot but welcome the new light which Spearman’s extensive learning enables him to throw upon the history of psychology, the pungency of many of his criticisms, and, above all, the most illuminating statement of psychology from the standpoint of the London school which we have yet received.

It is unfortunate that, in abandoning chronology, Spearman has found no satisfactory substitute which might give definite form to the two volumes. The five parts are ostensibly divided in a way which gives no indication of their actual contents. Part B, for example, bears the title “What the Psyche can do”, and is thus to be differentiated from part C, “How the Psyche is Constituted”, but when we look into the division in detail, we find Part B commencing with the statement that “from what psychology is seeking and how it is doing so, we go on to what it has found. And of its two great scientific domains, what exists and what coexists, we naturally begin with the former. This may be otherwise designated as the mental structure or

*constitution*" (Vol. I, p. 105, original italics). But if this is the subject-matter of Part B, what is the distinction from part C? And what precisely is this dark metaphysical distinction between what exists and what coexists? We are not vouchsafed an answer. We are only left to wonder why Shand's primary emotions appear in Part B, and his sentiments in Part C, or why Memory and Imagination appear both in Part B and in Part C, or why "the perception of relations", which is surely something "the psyche can do", appears in Part C. In fact, the principle of division which appears in the titles of the parts is a mere pretence. What we rather find is that Part B is a critical account of the theory of faculties which yet defends a faculty psychology; while Part C attempts to work out the details of such a psychology in conjunction with that theory of sensory units which it for so long opposed, a synthesis which explains the extent of Spearman's interest in Hamilton.

First, however, there comes Part A, which sets out to describe the nature of psychological theory, and its distinction from physiology and philosophy. Spearman does not share the prevalent disparagement of philosophy; its most bitter antagonists, he says, "are generally just those who appear to have studied philosophy least, but who nevertheless depend on philosophical dogma most" (p. 56). He considers it possible to discriminate certain problems within the philosophical field as amenable to psychological methods, leaving philosophy with the more intractable questions, but even such a degree of renunciation he admits to be difficult. As for physiology, he considers that any "tentative hypothesis" it has to make may be welcomed, but that what he calls "dogmatic information" is definitely out of place; which sounds as if physiology is all very well if it comes to no definite conclusions, but may otherwise be an embarrassment. Psychological method he takes to combine observation and experiment. Exact mathematical methods are important in handling results thus obtained; but if the results are not important, mere mathematics will not make them so, and a rebuke is administered to those who treat figures as an end in themselves in psychology.

Part B, as has already been indicated, concerns itself especially with a critique of faculty psychology. Spearman finds that the traditional faculties are now discussed in a confused and inconsistent way. Intellect is spurned as a superstition, but is merely replaced by Intelligence and even Attention, which Spearman also regards as an illegitimate descendant of Intellect. Tests, he says, on which great emphasis has been laid, are based on a theory so confused as to throw doubts upon their adequacy; and, as for Attention, it has been defined in an almost endless variety of ways. Similar controversy has greeted the attempt to establish sensory faculties. Some thinkers have exalted

the claims of Sense so as to make it coextensive with knowledge; others have regarded it as so imperfect not to be worthy of the name of knowledge. Even those who most emphasize sense frequently deny the very existence of sensory faculties, claiming that manifold sensations can explain the whole fabric of mind. Memory, Imagination and the "orective faculties", such as Will, have all met the same fate. Their very existence as separate faculties has been denied, and bitter unending controversy has raged about their nature. Thus anarchy seems to reign in the whole field.

We are not, however, to conclude that faculties have forthwith to be abandoned, but merely that a closer analysis of mind is required, that we may discover just what faculties it is necessary to postulate. Spearman feels himself obliged to defend the doctrine of faculties before undertaking this analysis. He uses a very effective *argumentum ad hominem*, pointing out that those psychologists who have most vehemently opposed the faculty theory have usually merely revolted against the name, and retained the thing. Spearman can point to "such universally accepted terms as 'dispositions', 'properties', and 'functions'" (Vol. I, p. 188). He presses the argument further than this. He claims that when the faculties were represented as agents, this was no more than personification, that "facultas" is really the same thing as "facilitas" and thus springs "from the extremely modest concept of bare facility". But on the very next page he argues that "the faculties were *not* depicted by their advocate as inert towards each other, but, on the contrary, as in active interplay" (p. 190). How a "bare facility" or, indeed, anything but an agency, could be in "active interplay" with anything else is not explained. His other argument is based upon a chemical analogy. "The mind has the power of thought", he says, "in the same sense that chlorine has the property of univalence, or oxygen that of melting at  $-227^{\circ}$ ". But the chemist does not regard "melting at  $-227^{\circ}$ " as some sort of power in oxygen which could be either inert or active towards "being insoluble in water"; these are things which can happen to oxygen under special conditions, not powers in it which make things happen. And if we ask what is insoluble in water, we are not told "Insolubility"; as when we ask, what remembers, we are told "Memory". The objection to a faculty psychology, in fact, is nowhere clearer than in Spearman's account of it; for when we ask what a faculty is, we are told that it is a bare facility, and the next minute we hear of its "functional unity", and its miraculous power (a facility with facilities!) of transcending the limitations of sense.

In Section C, Spearman appears once again as a champion of causes which we had hoped were lost. He proposes to undertake the analysis of mind as a preliminary to synthesis, and we are confronted



with simple mental units, units of sensation and units of feeling. Now, we may agree with Spearman that it is no more possible to object to analysis in psychology than it is anywhere else; that minds if they are "wholes", nevertheless have parts just like anything else, and that even if they are not physically separable into parts, we can at least, by abstraction, consider separately what exists as part of a single mind. This is not to admit that there are ultimate units out of which complexity can be somehow derived, it is not to admit that there is any end to analysis. In the chapter on perception, Spearman is rather cautious. "The stimulation", he says, "of a single sensory nerve-fibre produces a characteristic sensory percept of *maximum* simplicity and minimum (apparent) size" (p. 206, my italics). When different sensory stimulations are successive, on the other hand, "they are *more or less* blended together, and also *more or less* modified" (p. 207, my italics). These cautions reveal a certain hesitation in adopting a thorough-going doctrine of simple sensory units. However, when he comes to deal with "mental states", Spearman, seconded by Wolgemuth, throws caution to the winds, and denies that there is any difference between pleasures except in "intensity, duration and extensity" (p. 325). Unfortunately, this is not the place Spearman chooses for one of his many references to Plato; the "Philebus" might have been some help to us here. That there are logical difficulties in this view, or any difficulty in explaining how we come to choose one pleasure to another, never seems to occur to Spearman; his sole concern, curiously enough, is with the possible effects upon ethics which, he assumes without question, is a theory of pleasures. He concludes, finally, that "we might still maintain that the immoral man is after all not so much he who seeks pleasure of the wrong kind, as rather he who only cares to get it for *himself*". Thus it appears to Mill's "it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied", we are to reply "it is better to satisfy a fool than to be Socrates satisfied".

Apart from this attempt to re-establish a doctrine of sensory units, another cause, perennially lost but ever flourishing, finds expression in Part C, viz., a representationalist theory of perception. In fact, if we took Spearman quite seriously, we would be bound to say a Berkeleian theory of perception; for he argues "the quality of sensation is not determined by the nature of the objective stimulus; but only by the idiosyncrasy of the nerve stimulated" (p. 211). Presumably, although all Spearman gives us is this *ex parte* statement, he is thinking of the Müller law. However, even to establish the fact that under certain special conditions a given stimulus will be mistaken by us, e.g., that if a heated compass point is applied to certain parts of the skin it will seem to be cold, we must be aware that the compass point is hot, and

that it is a compass point. It is, then, only possible to show that we are mistaken under certain conditions, if there are other conditions under which we are not mistaken; and thus it is quite illogical to argue from particular errors about the nature of stimuli to a general theory of the type envisaged by Spearman. As readers of his "Creative Mind" will be well aware, Spearman is not content to leave the matter there, but believes that mind can "transcend itself" and know "external objects" by means of the noegenetic principles, i.e., by a species of analogy, so that in the last resort, sensations do somehow stand for things "outside" them. There is no space here to discuss this position, but it may be pointed out that it is only on Spearman's special assumptions that there is any "problem of transcendence" at all, and if we reject the conclusions Spearman draws from the Müller law, the "problem" disappears.

This is only a small part of the controversial material in Part C. "The perception of relations" is discussed in some detail, and Spearman's account of grouping, in particular, is of interest, as showing that division into groups is a species of selection. However, it does not seem possible to conclude that "the relation of 'and' is subjective; all other relations are objective" (Vol. I, p. 266); the dots, for example, which we group together in a certain way *are* together in some way (there is this dot *and* that dot). The only thing which is "subjective", in the sense that it depends upon our selection where it falls, is the particular line we take as bounding a group, or dividing one group from another, and this, as Spearman well shows, does depend upon our interests and the nature of our previous selections. This is the standpoint from which Spearman assaults what he calls "The Confusion that is Gestalt Psychology" (Ch. xxiv). He can show quite plainly that members of the Gestalt school are confused and inconsistent about the nature of "wholes"; that they do not explain clearly even what they mean by a Gestalt. He exerts the fullest efforts of his polemical skill against their attempt to assert the priority of "wholes". We might agree with his criticisms without in the least admitting that "if Associationism may be regarded as Psychological Enemy No. 1, cannot Gestaltism put in a claim to be at any rate No. 2?!" (p. 446). One suspects that much of Spearman's bitterness derives from an aspect of "Gestaltism" which he does not even mention; for whatever may be said of the final doctrine, it seems to the reviewer a forcible assault upon just that theory of "sensory units" to which Spearman is so inclined, with arguments against such "units" quite as convincing as Spearman's against "wholes". The correct conclusion might be that what we know is always something complex in a relatively indeterminate context.

For the rest, Spearman devotes considerable time in Part C to an analysis of "thought", indicating the principal views of its nature in a

particularly capable way, and has chapters on the dynamics of behaviour, the Unconscious, and the Ego. Of unconscious mind he says, "Here, at last, that which in other sciences is the general rule, occurs for once in psychology also: to wit, all the older literature has become more or less obsolete" (p. 385), but one wonders why a view which is apparently so important should be treated so badly in the matter of space. The best one can say of the chapters on "Mental Dynamics" and "The I and the Self" is that they indicate some of the problems by which investigators have been troubled. It is typical of the peculiarities of the London school that an "introspective experiment" by Aveling should have been taken to solve all such difficulties with its revelation of the Self as "a bare entity acting in some way" (p. 402), and of voluntary choice as "the adoption by the Self of the motives for the selection of one of the alternatives" (p. 312). The bare entity which can adopt motives is even better than the facility with facilities. It is easy to "discover" in such experiments just those conventional absurdities which it is the business of a critical psychology to destroy.

Of the second volume it is not necessary to say so much, although it is in many ways the more important of the two. We are now in territory familiar to everyone at all acquainted with the writings of the London school. It may appear peculiar that the entire second volume should be devoted to this school; but it is logical enough, if we are prepared to accept Spearman's claim that the laws of noegenesis are "a complete set of laws expressing and explaining the origin and the evidence of all knowledge" (Vol. II, p. 142). A review is not the place to examine these claims, which are not peculiar to the work at present under consideration; it is here only necessary to state the general construction of this second volume.

It is divided into two parts, which present the laws of succession and of concomitance in mind. Part D bears the title "What follows what?"; Part E, "What goes with what?". Part D begins with a discussion of the need for law in psychology and the nature of scientific law in general, and continues by stating the laws which appear in minds. Of these, the law of association is of the most historical importance, but this is not an ultimate law, being compounded of those which are afterwards described. The first is the Law of Retentivity, which, however, requires to be separated into two parts, a law of facilitation, to account for the existence of learning, and a law of inertia, to account for perseveration. The second main law is "the law of control", viz., "the amount of cognition may be directly controlled by conation" (p. 72). With this is very closely connected the law of constant output, that "every mind tends to keep its total simultaneous output constant in quantity, however varying in quality" (p. 101). All

these first four laws, then, are quantitative in character but, says Spearman, "Little it boots to determine 'how much' unless we can indicate 'of what'" (p. 120). This is the object of the laws of noegenesis, which seek to determine the nature of the operation of understanding. They are now familiar; the law of experience that "a person tends to know himself and items of his own experience" (p. 125), and the laws of relations and correlates. Finally, there is "the law of basal conditions", that "every manifestation of the preceding four quantitative principles is superposed upon, as its ultimate basis, certain primordial but variable individual potencies" (p. 167). We hear, as well, of "alleged laws of orexis" (p. 155); but these, as we might expect, do not appear in the official creed. Thus the strange conclusion is derived that the means by which we commonly predict conduct in everyday life fail us in psychology; the sequence of phases we take to be typical, say, in the development of human affection follows no known law but the order of knowledge does.

From these "laws of mental sequence" we pass, in part E, to an account of those "individual differences" with which Spearman's name is especially associated. This section is an excellent introduction to the whole subject. To many of us it still appears true that "the new typology", for all that extravagance and pretence at system before it has properly examined the facts, with which Spearman properly rebukes it, yet comes nearer to the really important "individual differences" than any theory based on tests; that difference in character, in "ruling passion", to use the eighteenth century term, is the fundamental thing. But whatever our final conclusions, we have now no excuse for lacking acquaintance with Spearman's position, for the present account of his Two-Factor theory is by far the clearest and most theoretically impressive. It incorporates a great deal of material which has hitherto only appeared in scattered articles—not only about G and S, but also W, P, F and O. Detailed statistical theory is naturally avoided; formulæ appear only in the notes.

Considering certain more general features of the work, we may draw attention to the remarkable extent of Spearman's learning, especially in the field of Greek and scholastic thinkers, a learning which enables him to show that much we now acclaim as novel was long ago anticipated. His successes lie particularly in the field of perception; his references to the "De Memoria" and "Theætetus" being especially relevant. It would seem, however, that he has not always had the benefit of recent Greek scholarship; for example, he takes the view, characterized by Zeller as a mere fable, that Protagoras was the pupil of Democritus (Vol. I, p. 61)—this would seem to reverse the real facts. Similarly, while his references to eighteenth and nineteenth century epistemology are usually telling and accurate, they are



frequently unduly compressed, and occasionally quite mistaken. For example, he credits Locke with saying that Space and Time were "primary attributes" of matter; whereas Locke is most insistent that Time is *not* a primary quality. As well as these faults of commission, there are others of omission. Thus, although he talks at considerable length of "sense and external objects" with special reference to philosophy, his philosophical education appears to have ceased in the last century. He says nothing of modern Realism except in a passing reference to Nunn and G. E. Moore (misprinted G. C. Moore in text, notes and index), and seems to be totally ignorant of Pragmatism. This ignorance, of course, he shares with most psychologists; it is just the extent of his references to men like Hamilton which sets it in such a lurid light, and leads one to regret that the reader is not left with a quite fair picture of philosophy.

It is an even more serious matter, however, that Spearman has neither sympathy for, nor comprehension of, that movement in psychology typified, however variously, in the work of Shand, McDougall and Freud. It is true that Spearman is prepared generously to admit, speaking of the theory of sentiments that "the great value of this theory—at any rate in the hands of these two authors (McDougall and Shand), can hardly be denied" (Vol. I, p. 354), but we are left rather bewildered where that value lies, especially when we are told that "evidently, the main facts have been well known since very ancient times. The sole novelty would seem to consist in formulating these facts as a scientific law" (Vol. II, p. 147). When we read Spearman's expression of the law, our bewilderment is not diminished. He presents it thus: "Any orectic attitude towards any object tends to induce auxiliary attitudes towards other objects." But surely it is the very essence of the doctrine of sentiments that the "auxiliary attitudes" are developed towards the *same object*, and, again, that it is not merely a matter of attitudes, but to quote McDougall, "of the completely organised structure of the mind that underlies all our mental activities" (Social Psychology, p. 122). Nor are we even left with this law, but are told that it can be reduced to those presented by Spearman; and there follows the amazing passage in which it is contended that in "the typical instance where the love of a mother for her child arouses her anger against an interloper . . . essentially the whole proceeding is not orectic at all, but *cognitive*" (original italics)—this on the ground that the mother merely seeks a means to an end. It is not observed by Spearman that the very conception of means and end is through and through "orectic"; and that it is the end which determines the succession of thought, not the succession of thought, the end. Thus warned, we may presume to doubt Spearman's claim that Shand simply restates Aquinas (Vol. I, p. 355); we can see that whereas Aquinas, as he is

quoted, speaks of a possible *succession* of emotions in relation to a single object, Shand is thinking of *persistent organizations*. Spearman is completely wrong in saying that "after all, the 'organization', 'sentiments', 'orectic logic', and 'mechanisms' deal only with the sequence of one orectic activity after another" (Vol. II, p. 151), and this fundamental error vitiates his entire account of "mental dynamics". What he says of Freud is even more misleading. Freud, he says, "took the very original step of proclaiming sex . . . to constitute the *sole* object of human volition" (Vol. I, p. 359, original italics). How Freud could have supposed repression to occur is not indicated. We expect, in any of Spearman's work, to find an emphasis on cognition, but not such a psychic blindness towards the very nature of sentimentalist theory, which also reveals itself in an ignoring of eighteenth century sentimentalism.

It is impossible to deal less severely with certain more formal features of the two volumes; a matter of no little concern in such a work. There are notes and index provided, but both are wholly unsatisfactory. The index is of the old-fashioned type, in which no attempt is made even to discriminate main from subsidiary entries, let alone to indicate precisely the nature of the reference. Thus, in considering what Spearman has to say of any particular writer, there is much irritating waste of time—especially as Spearman makes such a habit of mentioning names in passing. Further, the indexing is inconsistent; in some cases references in the notes are indexed, in others not, and no discoverable principle is involved. The notes are also unsatisfactory. For one thing, they are all collected together at the end of the second volume; but, more serious still, no device is used in the text to indicate the existence of a note on a particular point.

The text itself suffers from the fact that it is overladen with learning, and ignores some of the best known principles of historical writing. Merely to say "some prominent names were Herbert, Stewart, Hamilton, Bain, Volkmann and Wundt" is no assistance to the argument, and makes it a tremendously hard task to concentrate on the actual material being presented. Such details should be relegated to the appendix. Only to those who have read fairly widely in psychology and philosophy will most of the names convey anything at all; and since Spearman in no case gives a detailed continuous account of individual writers, ignorance is scarcely likely to be dissipated by the work itself.

It is a pity that the reader should be thus deterred; for however intensely he be annoyed at certain points, he cannot fail to gain both pleasure and profit from the latest of Spearman's contributions to psychology.

J. A. PASSMORE.

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN EDUCATION. By E. W. Thomas, Ph.D., and A. R. Lang, Ph.D. Published by George Harrap and Co. Ltd.

The aim of the authors is to "consider this important problem of a philosophy of education, to discuss the main bases upon which the process of education depends, and to explain somewhat the philosophy lying back of various modern educational practices in the United States" (Preface, p. VII). By philosophy they mean "any attempt to work out a systematic view of things"; not of things in general, but of various fields of things. Thus "we have the philosophy of art, conduct, education, mathematics, music, and so on" (p. 38).

Any attempt to build up a systematic view brings the authors face to face with the question: "What is education?" They answer: "Education is adjustment" (p. 25). This view is at the root of the weakness of the book, as well as being typical of the calibre of the authors' thought. Any living is adjustment of a kind. For Thomas and Lang any kind of living should be educated living. They say explicitly that "education should devote itself to life's realities and prepare for actual living" (p. 58). Since subsequent arise out of prior activities, any activity is preparation for living, *i.e.*, if we are to follow Thomas and Lang, any activity is education. This will not do. It is a mark of the incoherent character of the authors' views that they do not follow their theory to its conclusions. If they did they should be content to produce human beings living in any kind of way, but to discuss education at all they are forced to recognise that there are different ways of living, one of which is educated and the others not. They want to produce a specific way of life. Two questions present themselves: (a) What way of life do they want to produce? (b) Would a person living in this way be educated?

It is not as easy to answer the first question as might be expected. The book does not come to grips with problems. It merely glances at them and passes them by. The authors tell us that they accept "the best ideas of each" school of educational thought, but they don't specify what the "best ideas" are. However, they proceed on the assumption that the report of the American Commission on the reorganisation of Secondary Education (1918) is sound, though they commit themselves no further than to say that it is "the most influential and widely known modern statement of the objectives of education" (p. 11). According to the report "social efficiency should be the major aim of education" (p. 11). For determining more specifically what social efficiency involves, "it is necessary to analyse the activities of the individual . . . taking into account the most reliable data bearing on the normal individual's native equipment, personal development, and appropriate social relationships" (p. 13). Working on this basis "the following seven objectives were set up:

health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure time, and ethical character" (p. 11). Citizenship is really identical with social efficiency and includes all the other specific objectives as well as the "acquisition of useful civic knowledge", "the development of proper civic appreciations, attitudes and habits", and "a strong feeling of loyalty for one's native or adopted land" (p. 169).

Thus we see that adjustment must not be understood as just any kind of adjustment, but as appropriate adjustment, and appropriate is plainly a synonym for respectable. In other words, adjustment means fitting in with the powers that be. In all this there is no hint that education has anything to do with knowledge or enquiry. Failure to recognise enquiry as at least one of the aspects of education is surely to change the meaning of the word altogether. Once we have granted that education is enquiry (whatever else it may be), we find that it cannot also be some of the things that Thomas and Lang assert that it is.

They give no sign that it has occurred to them that society may clash with education—that the educated man may not fit in, *e.g.*, in Germany. When they speak of being loyal to one's "land" they do not go into the question of what they mean by this. Presumably they do not refer to loyalty to soil. We must take them to refer to loyalty to a certain social organisation—in other words, to a certain state. They make no attempt to show why an educated man should be loyal to his native or adopted land if the dominant social forces of that land oppose enquiry. For an educated Russian, German or Italian to be loyal to his "land" is to be disloyal to education. The educated man can be loyal to the social organisation within which he lives, only if such organization embodies freedom of enquiry and thereby supports education. If this is not the case an educated man does not serve the dominant social interests, *i.e.*, he is not socially efficient. In fact he is a definite hindrance to the dominant social interests because of his criticism of their repressions and from their point of view, socially inefficient, an "intellectual crank", or "misfit".

Were they to recognise that social organisation can be parasitic upon the individual, Thomas and Lang could not quote approvingly and without qualification Dewey's statement that "if an individual is not able to earn his own living and that of the children dependent upon him he is a drag or parasite upon the activities of others" (p. 10). It is sometimes the case that the individual is parasitical, but more often "others" are burdens upon him. Frequently social organisation ("others") is such that it can't stand criticism. If the individual is critical he will suffer through social organisation, since it will prevent him from being successful in a vocation, because he might



spread the infection of his critical attitude. That means that social organisation is burdening upon him, and since his being critical is a sign of education, it means further that social organisation is harming education.

In the same way the authors could not sustain their contention that "worthy home membership" is an end of education, even if the question-begging nature of the phrase were ignored. The home is often obscurantist and hinders the opening up of questions to which a conservative answer has been given. In such a case the educated person has to struggle against the home, has to carry on his enquiries either in the teeth of, or in withdrawal from home opposition. In other words, he is a bad home member precisely because he is educated.

Their dealing with ethical character even more clearly displays the weakness of the authors' position. Character education is of increased importance in modern education, they say, because of the prevalent "disrespect for law, order, authority, and moral standards" (p. 174). It seems plain that a man of high character is, on Thomas and Lang's view, one who respects law, order, authority and moral standards. One should expect them to ask, in a book which professes to go into principles and give a systematic view: Which law? Which authority? Which moral standards? They don't ask this. They assume that the answer must be: existing law, order, authority and moral standards. In character education they call for a conformer to standards imposed by society. If such standards are repressive of enquiry, one should expect an educated man to say: "So much the worse for the standards." Thomas and Lang would have to say, "so much the worse for enquiry", and in doing so, would have to abandon all pretence of being interested in education at all, and come plainly out for social conformity. It may be noted that a particular kind of character is developed by the educated man, but it will arise out of the fact that he has a real interest in enquiry, and, apart from developing his interest in enquiry by providing him with the opportunity for indulging it, educators cannot develop the character peculiar to an educated man.

Failure to take account of this weakens Thomas and Lang's treatment of leisure (a word by which they mean time not spent in vocational work), which they are very concerned should be used worthily. They say leisure pursuits should be such that they "furnish a permanent interest and confer some benefits". They don't explain why it is better to amuse oneself in a permanent interest than in something that happens only once. Moreover, "benefits" might mean anything. What, for example, are the educational benefits of card playing which they recommend?

It is true that there are pursuits in which an educated man cannot indulge. They do not fit into his way of life. Nevertheless, his avoidance of these may be left to himself if his interest in investigation is sufficiently strong, and, if he is not sufficiently interested in investigation, no amount of avoidance of these will make him live in an educated way. The authors can take up their stand on leisure only because they are not concerned with the maintenance of investigation but merely of respectability.

Apart from fundamental processes, this leaves us with the preservation of health as the one educational objective of Thomas and Lang still to be glanced at. The people that demand education may also want public health. It may be that the same institutions as foster education are the most competent for fostering health. Even if this be so, it does not justify us in characterising education as health. To do this is to distract attention from critical work, to make believe one is educating, when as a matter of fact, one is not. If we know of the critical work of Plato, we do not hesitate to call him educated, whatever the state of our knowledge of his physical constitution. On the other hand, we may not doubt the physical fitness of Charles Atlas, but in the absence of confirmation as to his mental state we make no assertions as to whether he is educated or not. I believe that even Thomas and Lang would not claim that a scholar who through advancing years broke down in several respects physically (*i.e.*, was in bad health) had ceased to be educated. If he can continue to be regarded as an educated man in spite of failing health, and if the business of educational institutions is to produce educated men, then it is not part of their work as educational institutions to concern themselves with health. This does not mean that some degree of health may not be a condition of education. It means that education is not health.

Finally, one would hardly quarrel with the notion that education involves some mastery of the fundamental processes—reading, writing and arithmetic. They are the main means of communication of knowledge and valuable instruments of investigation. Is this why they are included in Thomas and Lang's list of educational objectives? Not at all. Writing is included because it is needed for "friendly, social and business correspondence; filling out of business forms, and making permanent records and occasional notations" (p. 193); arithmetic because it is required for "bank dealings, budgets, buying and selling, determining interest, insurance investments, meter reading, taxes and the like" (p. 164). Limitation of outlook such as this is manifest on every page.

There is hardly need to say more of Thomas and Lang's views of educational objectives. They know nothing of the nature of educa-

tion and they want the schools to produce all those things which they consider desirable. They give them no special field of their own. Their treatment of the bases of education is on a par with their treatment of a philosophy of education, and so is their treatment of educational practice. As far as the two last sections of the book are concerned, I will glance briefly at their views on administration and, firstly, on who should be a teacher. Apparently whatever else the teacher must be he must not be a critical intellect of any force, for they say that "a forceful person is potentially as great a menace as a benefactor to society. As part of the school environment, the teacher's philosophy of life and his social views and conduct are of the utmost concern. He needs to be a person of the highest type of citizenship, irreproachable in character, discreet, broad in social mindedness, and sound in his philosophy of life. . . . He should maintain sane views regarding the place, purpose and function in society, of the family, economic organisation, church political state and school" (pp. 238-9). Thomas and Lang have already made plain what "sane" views are. Where teachers are regimented in the manner advocated by them, no critical outlook is possible, *i.e.*, no education.

The question of the selection of fit individuals to be teachers is bound up with the more general question of school administration.

Quite correctly, I think, Thomas and Lang say that the justification of an educational administration is "in providing continuously favourable conditions for learning" (p. 215). However, they go on to say that "continual reference to this basic service in evaluating administrative relationships is not only important for clarifying our philosophy of educational practice, but is a salutary reminder for school administrators themselves, who are constantly tempted to regard their elaborate organisation as an end in itself" (p. 215).

Here there is an assumption that there will be a school administrator, and the problems dealt with are those concerning the way in which he should handle his teachers, curricula, equipment, etc. It may be, though, that the only way to provide "continuously favourable conditions for learning" is to dispense with the school administrator altogether. That does not mean a dispensing with administration. It means a dispensing with an administrator (an official or a board) irresponsible as far as the teachers are concerned, one who organises as distinct from those who are organised. Administration may be carried out by those who teach—in other words, by democratic means. Thomas and Lang state the advantages of such democratic government without drawing the appropriate conclusions. "The best professional thought", they say, (p. 225) "is not likely to be wholly concentrated in the central authority, and it

is highly stimulating to general morale if opportunities for leadership in any special phase of educational progress are freely open to competence whenever it may exist in the staff. Such a democratic sharing of leadership naturally requires a corresponding plan of evaluation in order to protect the staff from impractical theorists and ambitious self-promoters. This defence can well be provided by a teacher's council, whose membership drawn from the teaching staff will probably be quickest to detect and reject insincerity or impracticality of proposals which they are to appraise before recommending them to the consideration of the general staff."

If the teacher's council is the best judge of the practicality of proposals it would seem to be the best body in which to vest administrative control. Thomas and Lang do not discuss such a possibility. This means that the democracy that they claim to be advocating is not democracy at all. They are asking merely for an advisory council to a despot. There is no "sharing of leadership", with the council because the council has no power or responsibility. While this is the case, all vague talk about the pupils' solving their own problems is without point. When even the teachers have the curricula, etc., mapped out for them by outside authority there is double tyranny for the pupils. For the teachers themselves there is the problem of winning the interest of the children, since that interest is not spontaneous. Since a programme must be imposed, this winning of interest involves a tickling of the minds of pupils by all sorts of devices, extrinsic to the subject matter itself, or by a dressing up of the subject in journalistic fashion; in other words, it means that the teacher must turn himself into a demagogue, in fact, the worst kind of demagogue, the dictator demagogue, who alternately hectors and clowns. Any attempt to extend initiative and responsibility among the pupils involves an extension of them among teachers. Thomas and Lang give no consideration to this question, though they declare themselves in favour of extension of initiative and responsibility on the part of the children. Consideration of such extension would involve such problems as: If the teachers are competent to judge of the educational merits of proposals, and the administrators do not always accept their proposals, then they (*i.e.*, the administrators) must represent forces other than educational forces. What are the consequences of the impact of such forces on education? Along what path does the extension of the initiative and responsibility of teachers lie? Had they undertaken to investigate such problems, the authors might have given us something worth while.

H. EDDY.



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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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### THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION POLICY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND.

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(To the Editor.)

Sir: In regard to the articles on the above subject from the pen of Professor W. Anderson, I desire to say: first, that the policy adopted was approved by the Entrance Board, Academic Board and Senate; second, that Professor Anderson's articles contain a number of errors of fact; third, that I regret that a philosophical journal should publish articles that show so much animus and lack so obviously the spirit of either science or philosophy; fourth, that an investigation into the Entrance Examination has been undertaken by the N.Z. Council for Educational Research and a volume giving the results of this inquiry will be published before the end of the year.

I am, etc.,

T. A. HUNTER,

Wellington, N.Z.,

September 30, 1938.

[Professor Anderson writes: I thought I had made it clear in the articles containing the unspecified errors of fact announced by Professor Hunter that the policy I criticized had passed the official bodies of the University. What then? I was not aware that *lèse majesté* had become a crime in the scientific or philosophical world. I take it "the spirit of either science or philosophy" is free discussion, i.e., discussion. It would have been quite as much to the purpose had the policy received the approval of the Racing Conference or the Trades Hall. Who are the N.Z. Council for Educational Research? May not the articles to which Professor Hunter takes exception have contributed to a more critical reading of the findings of this body when they shall appear? Professor Hunter's letter strengthens my belief (a) that, as usual, no defence of the basic assumptions of "scientific method" in the conduct of examinations is to be forthcoming, (b) that it is on the proof of these that depends the justification of the practical application of these methods, (c) that in the continued absence of such defence and proof it is in order to press the question *cui bono?*]



